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JOHN 8

Jesus the Light of the World

8 12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the
light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in
darkness, but will have the light of life." 13 The Pharisees
then said to him, "You are bearing witness to yourself;
your testimony is not true." 14 Jesus answered, "Even if I
do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, for I know
I have come and whither I am going, but you do
going. 15 You judge

- Large type—running from margin to margin
- Logical paragraphing and punctuation
- Poetry in verse form
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NOVEMBER, 1946

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Long ago a wise man set down in words found in the Apocrypha his gratitude for those who had created his nation and his religion. At this Thanksgiving time we make his words our own, for we too have entered without cost into the heritage for which others dreamed and labored.

"A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD" BY GOTTHARD KUEHL (GERMAN 1850-1915)
Courtesy of Art Museum of St. Louis

LET US NOW PRAISE famous men, and our fathers that begat us; . . .
Men who bore dominion in the earth, and men famous for their might,
Giving counsel by their wisdom, and speaking with prophetic power;
Statesmen who were as princes of the people, and leaders trusted for their insight; . . .
Such as sought out pleasant music, and fashioned songs in skilful rhymes;
Men of resource and furnished with strength, dwelling peaceably in their habitations.
All these were honored in their generation, and had glory in their day.

And some there be that have no memorial, who are forgotten as though they had not been.
Nevertheless they were men of mercy, and their righteous deeds have not been in vain.
For they left a good inheritance to their seed, and their children are their testament. . . .
Their bodies were buried in peace, but their name liveth to all generations.

Ecclesiasticus 44:1-14

This is my Father's world

The experience of God in nature

By Mary Ellen Hawk Saunders*

The following poems, mostly translated from Chinese sources, may be used for personal meditation. For group use, hymns of the autumn season may be added.

We worship thee, O God

The Lord is in his holy temple,
Let all the earth keep silence before him.

The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
For he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.
Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood,
And hath not sworn deceitfully.

PSALM 24:1-4

At early dawn all nature worships thee[1]

Early rise and see
Eastward the red sun,
Bridegroom-like in strength,
His glad course doth run.
High in the heaven birds fly,
Flowers' scent earth doth fill;
God's grace shines on me,
Seeking now His will!

The Lord is my gardener[2]

The Lord is a gardener; my heart is his garden.
In my garden grow trees and flowers;
There flows a spring of eternal life.
My garden has its four seasons, and every season
God's grace harmonizes and enchants the beauty of the garden.
My Lord the Gardener rises early and works late.
He fears neither wind nor rain;
He dreads neither snow nor cold.
He works mightily in my garden,
He makes it daily fresh and new.
Praise to my Lord for the light of his grace that glorifies my garden.
I give this garden to thee, O Lord, forever into thy keeping.

We find peace and comfort in nature

SAILING HOMEWARD

Cliffs that rise a thousand feet
Without a break,
Lake that stretches a hundred miles
Without a wave,
Sands that are white through all the year
Without a stain,
Pine-tree woods, winter and summer,
Evergreen,
Streams that forever flow and flow
Without a pause,
Trees that for twenty thousand years
Your vows have kept,
You have suddenly healed the pain of a traveler's heart,
And moved his brush to write a new song.

CHAN FANG-SHENG

NIGHT THOUGHTS

I wake and moonbeams play around my bed,
Glittering like hoar-frost to my wondering eyes;
Up toward the glorious moon I raise my head,
Then lay me down—and thoughts of home arise.

LI PO

COMPANIONS

The birds have all flown to their roosts in the tree,
The last cloud has just floated lazily by;
But we never tire of each other, not we,
As we sit there together, the mountains and I.

LI PO

THE NORTH STAR

The sky is like a circling wheel,
It rests not night nor day;
Sun, moon, and stars do rise and set
Without a moment's delay.

The North Star abiding at the Pole
On royal noble throne;
The heavenly stars swing round and bow,
Each on the course ordained its own.

Not moving to come down,
By virtue, not violence, to flow;
The heavenly bodies rule the earth,
All things come to birth and grow.

By motion and tranquility
In unlike spheres with equal gain,
May the emperor know to act like this—
Thus o'er a myriad states to reign.

SU TUNG P'O

God is still with us

(A modern Christian poet has expressed his feelings as he and his family made the long trek westward during the invasion of China in 1938.)

THE LONG EXPEDITION OF THE YANGTSE RIVER

The whole family are walking, are walking, step by step,
On the road from Nanking to Nanchang.
Walking, walking—a thousand and five hundred li;
Past and over two hundred days and nights,
Lost and gone is everything save our own bodies;

Still our heavenly Father bestows on us his gifts:
Many friends with loving hearts,
Sun and moon, the stars, rain and snow, wind and frost,
Great rocks, mighty rivers, skies full of clouds and lofty mountain peaks,
Dense forests, tall bamboos, birds' cries, and the fragrances of flowers—

The more was given us—joy which gold cannot buy,
And health to struggle with wind and water, burning sun and open air;
And then he gave us peace that passeth all understanding.

NEWTON CHIANG[3]

AT EARLY MORN I BEND MY STEP[1]

Daybreak, when I pray apart
And to worship till my heart;
Hearing but Him; seeing but Him;
Purest joy o'erwhelms me:
Now my Saviour is beside me,
Near as nearest friend,
Speaking of love all things above:
Deeper reverence fills me!

---

* Advisor, China's Children Fund, Richmond, Virginia and Shanghai, China.

[1] Hymn translated by A. P. Hedwen.

[2] Psalm (based on Psalm 23) by Chinese student, translated by Pansy Griffin.

[3] In *China Rediscovers Her West*, by Yi-fang and Frank W. Price.

Volunteers are like that

They won't be pushed around

By Frances Dunlap Heron*

MRS. GREGORY'S FEELINGS were hurt. For years she had been playing the organ for the Sunday school in the little white church at the crossroads. Now Edith Brown, aged thirteen, sat on the stool and pumped. She sat there because Mr. Sanders, the new superintendent, thought that her five years of piano lessons made her accompaniments far preferable to the hit and miss efforts of Mrs. Gregory.

Today the Sunday school pupils, young and old, were practicing songs for their Christmas program. Mrs. Brown, Edith's mother, and Mrs. Gregory were both in the front seat "choir."

"Edith played that too slow," said Mrs. Gregory at the end of one hymn.

Mrs. Brown suggested that Edith play faster. Again Mrs. Gregory complained, "Too slow."

"All right, Edith, play faster," ordered Mrs. Brown with a grim glance.

Edith took the cue. She played that Christmas carol faster—and faster. Mrs. Brown sang faster—and faster. One by one the Sunday school singers dropped out. When the last measure was reached only Mrs. Brown's soprano voice survived. She and her daughter exchanged triumphant looks. The assembly smiled—that is, all except Mrs. Gregory. She said, "That was *too* fast."

People are like that

This true incident took place nearly thirty-five years ago. But church school workers have not changed. They still get their feelings hurt. A city church school asked Mr. Monroe, a retired musician, to be superintendent because "it would be something nice for him to do." His first enthusiasm wilted when he discovered that closely graded lessons were well intrenched in the church school in place of the uniform lessons of his youth. Then when the teachers discussed calling in one of those professional "religious educators" for guidance, Mr. Monroe said there was no use in his remaining superintendent—he wasn't needed. He resigned.

Mrs. Booth, church school teacher of some eleven-year-old girls, set a certain afternoon for rehearsing a choral recitation. The girls failed to attend because of a conflict with a more exciting diversion. Hurt and indignant, Mrs. Booth resigned, in spite of the mothers' belated efforts at atonement.

A minister and his church school superintendent agreed that an envelope system for pupils' weekly offerings would encourage stewardship. At a workers' conference they called for comments. Teacher after teacher expressed approval. It was time for Mr. Johnson, the secretary-treasurer, to speak. "If you adopt the envelope system," he threatened, "you'll have to find a new secretary-treasurer. I won't have the mamas calling me up and saying I've lost their child's money. No, sir!" He went on to say that always before in his ten years' service his methods had been considered satisfactory, but now—

Any reader of this article can draw similar instances from his own experience. The very nature of Protestant church schools offers opportunity for problems of personal adjustments. Practically all workers are volunteer—and when you're not being paid you won't be pushed around! The essence of Protestantism is its democratic government and its insistence on individual dignity. Mrs. Jones in the primary department, therefore, certainly isn't going to let either the general superintendent or the pastor tell her how long a worship service she's to hold. When a dictatorial person gets into a position of church school leadership, the likelihood of friction is greatly increased.

If you will just remember—

Yes, human nature is like that, and someone is always saying you can't change human nature. But you can change a person's attitude toward his human nature! You must change it if a church school is to work with greatest efficiency, if it is to set an example of Jesus Christ's power in transforming sinful men. The goal toward which a church school superintendent must work is this: he and each of his workers must sacrifice personal whims and feelings for the good of the whole group of teachers and pupils. Each church school worker will make a long start toward that goal if he can accept these three fundamentals:

1. There will be few tangible expressions or evidences of appreciation of your efforts, on the part of either pupils or parents. Instead, there will be criticism from those adults who do the least!

2. The greatest compensation you can expect is the satisfaction that comes from doing well a job that you know needs to be done.

3. You must feel that the job of Christian education, being the last hope of the world in these critical days, is bigger than you or your pride or your dignity or the mistakes of your co-workers.

Once workers can see their church school activity in that light, the possibility of preventing and resolving conflict is much strengthened. Until that happy day arrives, however, when *all* assistants so regard their task, the superintendent and pastor can take practical steps to remove causes of difficulty and to build up morale.

Let's get to the bottom

The starting point is to try to discern what causes misunderstanding and conflict. For some evils there are specific remedies and for other troubles the correctives are simply general improvements in administration or methods. Some of the more common causes of friction are:

1. *Envy.* Near the top of the list is envy, though of course no church school worker would admit guilt. It's true that often Mrs. White does not realize that the reason she finds fault with Miss Black's suggestions at the teachers' meeting is that she wants to detract from Miss Black's prestige. Secretly she must admit that Miss Black is an excellent teacher, a conscientious worker, a favorite with her pupils. Mrs. White feels inadequate when she compares her efforts with Miss Black's. She therefore bolsters her own ego by trying to find signs of imperfection in Miss Black. The case

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of Mrs. Gregory and Edith and how fast to play the organ is a perfect example of envy.

The wise superintendent will try to meet this problem by making each individual on his staff feel important and necessary. In workers' conferences he will not always play up the achievements of one particular teacher or department superintendent. He will call attention to the achievements of different classes and teachers and will use these in worship services or assembly programs. He will not always appoint the same persons to the same committee. Above all, he will speak personal words of appreciation and encouragement to teachers individually. Sincere praise is an excellent incentive.

2. *Sensitiveness.* Another manifestation of ego is touchiness. Too many church school workers are inclined to feel that suggestions or changes are personal insults. Practically every organization has one or more such "handle with care" persons. Almost anyone gets so tired sometimes that he "flies off." Many instances of wounded feelings are best ignored, for by next Sunday the hasty words will be forgot and smiles restored.

Where an incident genuinely affects morale, however, utmost tact and sympathy are in order. In the case of Mr. Johnson, the secretary-treasurer who refused to deal with the mamas, the minister had two alternatives. He might have said, "All right, go ahead and resign," thereby distressing the entire Johnson family and depriving the church school of Mr. Johnson's faithful and valuable clerical assistance. What the minister did do, after pointing out that one's personal preferences couldn't determine church school policy, was to say, "All right, we'll keep you doing all the secretarial duties and banking, and we'll find someone else to take over the offering envelopes." A high school girl was delighted to assume that responsibility and Mr. Johnson graciously continued his duties.

3. *Irresponsibility.* The problem for the superintendent faced with irresponsibility, uncooperativeness, and gossip on the part of his teachers is to determine whether the cause is personal shortcomings too great for him to cope with, or, is maladministration. If ingrained shortcomings are the difficulty, the person so afflicted should be barred or dropped from the staff. No such stern action should be taken, however, until the superintendent is sure that he himself or the administrative methods he has inherited are not the real trouble maker.

Perhaps the church school doesn't have a definite goal of which every person on the staff is aware. Perhaps the teacher is told to "use any material you want," and possibly the whole program, so-called, is haphazard and pointless.

To inspire right attitudes in a teacher toward himself, his fellow workers, and his job, the church school executive must tell him exactly what is expected of him rather than leave him to his own devices, which may be scanty. The first step is to lay out a sound curriculum and to define the goals, select the materials, and outline the general methods for each department and each class.

The next step is to train each teacher for his task (to be discussed below in more detail). A third measure well calculated to inculcate feelings of responsibility and dignity is a "Recognition Sunday" church service, during which members of the church school staff publicly accept their duties. At the same time the church congregation pledges its support to the staff. This dedication ceremony, followed by an appropriate sermon, often takes place during Religious Education Week. It is one of the many opportunities for increasing home and church school cooperation. If Mrs. Booth, the teacher who gave up her class because her pupils failed to attend a rehearsal, had had informed and interested mothers, such an unfortunate situation might not have arisen.

4. *Ineptitude.* The teacher not properly equipped for his work flounders about in class, irritating his pupils and himself. He is likely to get disgusted with the whole idea—with the rest of the staff, with parents, with religious education itself.

An ongoing leadership education program will perhaps do more than anything else to improve the attitudes of workers. Enrichment of their religious knowledge and inspiration through courses of study, books, talks by specialists in religious education and psychology, will help church school leaders to put aside pettiness.

5. *Misassignment.* Sometimes a good and faithful church school worker seems always to have a chip on his shoulder because he is not in the job for which he is best fitted. Mr. Monroe, the retired musician, should never have been asked to take the superintendency as a hobby! It is possible to transfer a person from one job to another without his feeling injured, provided the new job is not just manufactured. For example, one leader had the problem of replacing a department superintendent with a newcomer to the community who could give more time and thought to the work. Instead of boldly dethroning the older worker and thereby losing her experience and effort, he talked her into taking a new position as visual education chairman for the church school—to investigate resources, inform teachers, and obtain slides and movies for special programs.

6. *Character faults.* Though the power of Jesus can make over even such a reprobate as Augustine of Hippo into a saint, sometimes the transformation isn't far enough along to justify placing a given "transformee" over a class of young Christians. He may be agreeable and able, but if his private deportment is unsatisfactory, or if he is given to fits of temper, or is prone to recrimination, or gossip, or smart aleckiness, or some other character shortcoming that is not due to faulty working conditions in the church school, he should be dropped from the staff as gracefully as possible. Of course, the best method is to keep him off the staff in the first place. To avoid such unpleasantness, the superintendent should consider carefully the merits of any person before inviting him to teach. He shouldn't enlist a woman just because "she lives close to the church," or a man because he "has to bring the children to Sunday school anyhow."

All these efforts of church school leaders to produce a Christian atmosphere in personal relations will be of little value unless the example of Jesus is forever central. A discouraged teacher can find courage in realizing that Jesus met and overcame unappreciation, animosity, misunderstanding, injustice. He rose above them with love, patience, forgiveness, prayer and faith in his heavenly Father's plan. Surely his followers today who accept the honor and responsibility of spreading Jesus' teachings, who in the eyes of little children represent those teachings, can strive to rise above such irritations as arguments over whether it shall be potato salad or goulash at the workers' conference supper.

What every superintendent should know—

About the junior department

By Atha S. Bowman *

Ann Arbor Weekday Schools

Today juniors are more mature and capable than those in years past.

JUNIORS OF THE CHURCH is a term given to boys and girls who are approximately nine, ten and eleven years of age. Ordinarily they are in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades in public school. Today juniors are older in experience, more mature emotionally, and more capable of independent thinking than were juniors in years past. They show an increased sense of responsibility for nurturing young children, and are more capable of leadership in the church and community. Therefore the church school should challenge these boys and girls to more advanced work, study and leadership in their department and in the fellowship of the church.

Grouping

For each group of 20 or 25 juniors there should be a leading teacher or superintendent and at least two assistant teachers. The assistants may serve as secretary and as pianist in addition to their teaching duties. Best work with juniors can be done when there are not more than 25 or 30 boys and girls in the department. The following are some general principles to follow in grading juniors:

1. If there are as many as 75 boys and girls in the junior department, they should be divided into three groups; that is, fourth grade or nine-year-old juniors in one room to themselves for the whole time, and the same with the fifth and sixth grades.

2. Boys and girls of the same grade and age grouped together make for a more natural situation.

3. Men teachers should be encouraged to teach in the junior department and they should have classes that include both boys and girls.

* Director, Children's Division, Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication, Presbyterian Church in the U. S., Richmond, Virginia.

The junior room

As a junior enters his department on Sunday morning the very atmosphere should create a desire for study, work and worship. The room spotlessly clean, free from unnecessary furniture, old photographs and left-over supplies, should be attractive and comfortable. The size of the room for approximately twenty-five juniors should be about 20 x 24 feet. On rectangular tables conveniently placed will be work and study material related to current units, such as: books, maps, pictures, paper, and pencils. These rectangular tables may serve for class tables also. There should be an unbroken wall space where a beautiful large picture is hung on the eye level of the boys and girls when seated. Under the picture may be a low table arranged as a worship center. The chairs should be of the non-folding type, sturdy, comfortable, and of the right height. Other items of furniture needed for a junior room are: a piano, a good portable blackboard, a cabinet for supplies, and a hat and coat closet or rack.

Goals and curriculum

In the junior department leaders will strive toward helping these boys and girls grow steadily and wholesomely as Christian personalities, with an increased understanding and use of Christian values and loyalties. Juniors should show some progress in using the Bible in their worship and study, in their personal devotions and in many other ways which will contribute to their growth as Christians.

Curriculum includes more than printed material, although printed materials are a part of it. Curriculum is experience so guided that certain objectives or goals may be realized. Graded lesson materials, which are a part of the curriculum, are important for leaders who guide experiences of junior boys and girls through various stages of Christian growth. There are two series, the Closely Graded Lessons, that is, material for each year, and the Cycle Graded, which is planned on a department basis; that is, for juniors the three-year cycle is developed one year at a time for use in all three grades in the department. Leaders will find this material indispensable as a guide in planning for worship, study and work activities for each session.

Sufficient time for good teaching

The church should not limit its work with juniors to one hour on Sunday. During the week or on Sunday an expanded session is recommended. If possible, the leaders of the regular church school should guide the activities for the second hour. In places where this is not the case, the junior leaders of the church school session and the

(Continued on page 34)

The future is assured

Judging by the veterans who attended the Conference of Young Churchmen

By J. Gordon Chamberlin *

THEY WERE THREE HUNDRED serious young men who met at Lakeside. They had come from all over the United States, sent by their churches to share in a National Conference of Young Churchmen. Twenty denominations were represented. Lutherans, Southern Baptists and Quakers sat down with delegates from the Church of the Brethren, Disciples and Episcopalians to discuss churchmanship. So thoroughly as one did they feel that there was objection to holding any separate denominational meetings.

They are serious

Their demeanor and concentration was a far cry from the typical veterans' convention, yet nearly ninety percent of the delegates at Lakeside were veterans. A few were ministers, some chaplains. There were truck drivers, store keepers, college professors and farmers. Here were the same ingredients of so many successful conferences — variety of delegates, representatives from all over the nation, top-flight speakers (such as Dr. Bela Vasady of Hungary, Dr. Wilhelm Pauck of Chicago, Dr. George Heaton of North Carolina, Dr. Frederick Reissig of Washington, D. C., and Professor Kirtley Mather of Boston) and a detached lakeside setting. And the natural result was a thrill worth repeating.

But the thrill was sobering and the repetition may be very significant. This conference, jointly sponsored by the International Council of Religious Education and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, brought these two great interdenominational agencies together for the first time in such a venture. The purpose was as unique as the sponsorship — to consider with a group of young men the idea of churchmanship in the local church and community.

They want to know

Promotion followed the usual routine of selected delegates, advance memoranda and suggestions for reading. Yet when these excellent young men arrived at Lakeside and started their discussions, the serious failure of the churches adequately to train their young in the work of the church became apparent. The young men recognized it, too. They joined in the general criticisms made so frequently by chaplains and veterans' groups — the church did not teach us enough history, doctrine and organization. But there is hope in this, too. The criticism seems to be more than a wartime gripe. The serious desire of young men to know, a willingness to study so they may become churchmen, has remained. It is hopeful.

The ignorance of doctrine, history and organization was matched by an equally troublesome ignorance of what the church is doing in this country and around the world. When a special evening program presented fifteen different creative projects of the churches, from helping migrants get better living conditions, to the recent meeting of a special commission of the World Council of Churches in Cambridge, England, the information was new to most of the delegates. They want to be churchmen but they just don't read the religious periodicals of their own denominations or of interdenominational agencies. They don't know what is going on. Yet again there is great encouragement in the way they respond when informed. When they see how significant the work is they are seriously interested in taking a part in it.

Perhaps this is the tragic situation in too many churches — hope has been smothered by timidity. Fearful of asking too much of our young men, we fail to show them the church's inherent challenge and thus our best hope for a revitalized church is buried.

Equally hampering has been the strong promotion of segments of the church's mission, as though they were more important than others. The idea of churchmanship to which these young men responded is centered upon the total inclusive work of the church — in which education is not more important than missions, or stewardship than evangelism, and these are not set in competition. This idea is difficult for many professional church leaders to accept. Those who have given their lives to "missions" or to "religious education" or to "evangelism" have so immersed themselves in that one aspect that they feel it is central and the others derivative. But just because they are always "bumping" into other segments and for administrative purposes high walls of demarcation have been erected, there is need for a new inclusive sense of the church's work and a new hope in the response it gets from young men.

They are willing to work

One other hopeful indication at the National Conference of Young Churchmen was the readiness of the young men to center their attention on churchmanship in the local church and community. In the local church is where ninety-five percent of the fellows will have to experience churchmanship if at all. The job is toughest there — toughest to keep alive a sense of significant mission, toughest to stay prophetic. But the young men spent their time discussing that particular area. Out of the discussion came no grand set of resolutions telling the nation and the church what to do. Rather the "findings" consisted of a set of commitments the young men made for their own personal spiritual growth, for work in their local church, in their own community and in the wider community of the world. I think they meant what they said.

Surely the church has no need to fear the future if she will give a chance and serious challenge to her young men. This is reintegrating returning serivce men. It is laying the groundwork for our future hope.

* Executive Secretary, New York Conference Board of Education, Poughkeepsie, New York.

The primaries see a movie

And think of God

By Dorothy Carl*

Here is a detailed account of the way in which a short motion picture was integrated into the unit of study being used in a primary department. Note that the picture was selected to fit the study, that very careful preparation was made for its use, and that it was followed up, so that it reinforced the spirit of worship instead of detracting from it. The picture was used as a means to worship, not as an end in itself.

OUR PRIMARY CHILDREN gathered in their "little church" room one Sunday in early spring to think about "These Things Are Sure." We wondered together about spring happenings. We enjoyed the poem, "Wondering" by Jeannette Perkins and the story, "Bobby's Question: Is Anything Sure?"[1] We repeated the assurance of the Bible verse, "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." With these and the worshipful thoughts in the song, "Lord of the Sunlight," we had launched the unit on springtime and Easter.

We make advance preparation

At a leadership training course on visual aids I had seen a reference to the movie, "Robin Red Breast."[2] I had previewed it and found it delightful for primary children. A member of our board of religious education, Mr. Glenn Turner, had offered to use his new machine any Sunday, so arrangements were made to have the film and the projector on the second Sunday of our unit. I was hopeful about the values and the results of this, our first movie venture, but I admit I did some wondering!

Thanks to Mr. Turner's early preparation I arrived the next Sunday morning to find the screen and projector set up and ready for the children. If the screen tripod stands behind the usual worship table and the worship theme picture is on a portable easel in front of it, no changing is necessary later except the removal of the easel and picture.

In our early "Sing" I told the children that Mr. Turner would show us a movie during our worship together. The movie was to be about the story the first and second grades would hear in their class rooms. Would they help retell it for the third grade children during the worship period? There was eager response, of course. We sang their favorite spring songs from the large pictured song chart: "Early in the Morning," "God Who Made the Earth," "A Thank You Song," and "God Is Near." They then went to their various class rooms, anticipating the fun of a movie later.

We continue the theme in class study

In the class work the first grade children heard the story about the "Little Brown Bird,"[3] which follows the movie delightfully. They used the large picture of the "Sermon on the Mount" by Elsa Anna Wood for study and learned how the flowers and birds helped Jesus teach one day.

The second grade had a similar story, including some wonderings about the birds' knowing how to build their nests and care for their babies. They learned the verse, "Stand still and think of the wonders of God" and illustrated it with crayon drawings of wonders of spring they had observed.

The third grade followed the previous Sunday's worship theme, the verse, "While the earth remaineth," and proceeded with their seasonal scrap book. They found typed verses appropriate for the pictures they selected and mounted. Several used their own Bibles and marked the verses. During the story period they heard another story of Jesus teaching.

We worship, using the movie

After singing "Early in the Morning," which ends with "thanking thee today," we bowed our heads in prayer, thanking God for gifts of springtime, the birds in their nests, and fragrant flowers. We closed with the thought, "Help us to feel close to thee as we see the wonders of spring all about us. Amen."

We imagined together a setting for our story today—a hillside with warm breezes stirring branches overhead, white clouds drifting across the blue sky above, the birds singing and flowers in blossom near by. Jesus is sitting with people around him listening to his teachings. Some of the small children have gone to sleep in their mothers' arms; several are quietly playing in the sandy soil near by. Up in the tree are three little nests. Our primary children suggested there were blue eggs in one. "Robins," a little girl said. "Tiny birds curled up all asleep" were in another, and in the third one, a child said, they "had grown so large they were almost crowded out of the nest."

One did fly out! He opened his wings and with a delightful feeling he sailed down, down to the ground. Crumbs from a child's lunch attracted him and he eagerly pecked away. Nearby, Jesus was quietly talking and then several people began to ask questions. The little bird listened! The people were worried and fussing about their food, their work, their clothes. They asked questions about God. "How do we know God loves us: he seems so far away! How do we know he cares?" Jesus' quiet voice answered them, "Look at the birds in the air and in the trees."

I recalled with the children how mother and father birds know how to build their nests, care for the eggs, protect and feed the babies until they are old enough to care for themselves. Jesus said, "Do you suppose God, who plans this earth so well that even the little birds know how to do all these things, would not plan even more for you? They don't worry, and neither should you. God knows your needs; God cares for you; he cares."

I picked up a real robin's nest and walked slowly down the center aisle, holding it so the children could see. They

* Primary Superintendent, First Plymouth Congregational Church, Lincoln, Nebraska.

[1] From *Child Guidance in Christian Living*, March 1945.

[2] See source and description at end of article.

[3] Closely Graded Course I, Part 3.

came closer and peered over each other's shoulders. We continued conversationally: The robins know how to make this nest of grass and string and mud much better than we do; they know they must keep the eggs warm. Father bird takes his turn sitting on the eggs and feeds the mother, too. They know how to feed their babies worms and teach them how to find food for themselves later.

"If God has planned this wonder so carefully, surely he plans even more for us," we concluded. Together we sang,

"God, who made the earth,
The air, the sky, the sea,
Who gave the light its birth,
Careth for me."[4]

The picture "He Prayeth Best" by Margaret Tarrant was at the worship center and we enjoyed it. This picture shows a child in prayerful attitude surrounded by nature's beauty in the out-of-doors and by his little animal friends. While the younger children hummed a bird chorus accompaniment, the older ones sang, "Sometimes when flowers are in bloom."[5] Then the third grade sang for the others, "We thank thee for teaching the birds how to sing."

Then the movie began with no pause except the statement that Mr. Turner would now show us our movie called "Robin Red Breast," about the family life of the little birds up in the tree.

The children loved it! It was easy to feel together the thoughts of the poet as we sang softly, "God, who made the earth, careth for me," which was repeated several times as they were dismissed.

They were reluctant to leave and gathered in little groups around their leaders, telling about robins they had seen doing these same things. Seven parents had visited during the worship period and were very impressed by the type of things presented and the way the children had contributed their thoughts.

The presentation had been perfect mechanically, had correlated with the session's stories and had supplemented our aims delightfully. The teachers have asked for an annual repetition.

Other groups also see the movie

In addition to the primary children's enjoyment of the movie two other groups were invited to see it. While our primary children were busy in their class rooms the twenty-five kindergarten children came into our "little church." They were delighted to see the pictures of the robins, and at the conclusion sang their little song about being glad today for robins, ending with "Thank you, loving Father." Then, singing about birds flying, they fluttered their little arms and flew tip-toe down the long hall to their own room. A few minutes later they sent the primary children the real robin's nest from their Wonder Corner to use during our worship period. This was their "Thank you." Of course their leader had also previewed the film and had told a story leading up to the movie presentation.

After church a group of juniors asked to see the movie and Mr. Turner kindly showed it again. Most of these were Camp Fire Girls and Bluebirds and could use a review of this story in their nature notebooks. About one hundred and twenty persons saw the movie that one morning.

This week I previewed "Gray Squirrel," which will be fine next fall with winter preparation stories both primary and kindergarten. "Adventures of Bunny Rabbit" will correlate with the story "Each Likes His Own Home Best" which we like to retell from the old kindergarten closely graded course during our unit on homes. Several other films could be used with a helpers' unit, especially "Farm Animals." We are looking forward to the children's enjoyment and closer contact with the family life of their little animal friends as we explore together God's gifts in the out-of-doors.

[4] By Sarah H. Rhodes in *The New Hymnal for American Youth.*
[5] "God Is Near" in *Worship and Conduct Songs* by Shields.

Robin Red Breast

1 reel, sound, 11 min. Produced by Visual Education Department, Encyclopedia Brittanica, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois. Rental, $2.50 one day; .50 each additional day.

Review: Father and Mother Robin are shown building their nest. After Mother Robin has laid her eggs, Father Robin helps to keep the eggs warm and feeds the mother on the nest. The development of the young in the nest is depicted from hatching to maturity. The babies are fed worms and learn to flutter to nearby branches; finally fly to ground from overcrowded nest. Mother helps "big baby" find food. The calls and notes of the birds are reproduced and the narrator speaks simply of the events shown.

A Teacher's Prayer

Lord, here I humbly stand before thy throne
With nothing in my hand, save that alone
Which thou didst give (it is thine own)!

Insight to know another's need;
Power to do a kindly deed;
Faith that can grow like mustard seed;

A mind alert, a heart that glows,
A skilful hand, a love that grows,
Patience, courage, and trust that knows

That thou canst use what thou didst give,
Through me to help my friends live! Amen.

By DONALD F. LOMAS

How does a city council work?

By E. C. Farnham*

HOW can Protestant influence be felt in a community? The ways to build the Protestant institution, philosophy and influence into the community pattern are legion, and will vary according to the community and its circumstances. It is a fallacy to assume that the pattern of action in one community may fit any or all communities. However, there are basic principles common to all which can be enumerated, at least in part and by way of illustration.

Take part in community activities

First comes the matter of identification with community life. This can be accomplished as the council executive and his staff members participate in community activities. This may prove to be a major part of the executive's job; but he will be amply repaid by the insights gained and the suggestions he receives for strategic action by the church. At this point, I make a plea that there be more adequate staff facilities for church councils; and that in the building of the staff particular attention be given first to the employment of department directors instead of workers for a highly specialized though limited function. The departmental director becomes another contact with the community, at least a phase of the community, augmenting the executive. If he is a good director, and his field of interest is broad enough to warrant, he will soon have numerous specialized activities with the appropriate number of workers.

Identification with community can be accomplished also by the use of volunteers. Indeed, it is a major executive responsibility to see that volunteers are discovered and related to important community activities such as the Community Chest, the Red Cross, the P. T. A., etc. It should be pointed out, however, that Protestantism, while furnishing much of the community leadership and working force, has suffered serious loss due to the failure of such workers to identify themselves as church members. Good religious engineering will seek ways to correct this shortcoming. In one city, the church council has secured a volunteer, a church woman, who does systematic enlistment of volunteers from churches to assist in the Community Chest drive. She sees to it that these volunteers are listed with the Chest as coming from a particular church and at the close of the campaign she makes a detailed report by denominations and by churches.

It is important that the community come to know that the churches observe the community calendar, and otherwise share in community undertakings. The council office is an important link in these relationships.

The cultivation of public bodies is another means of community identification. The council which is served by the writer has found great value in periodic dinners or luncheons for public servants such as the local delegation to the State Legislature, the City Fathers, and the Board of Education. Care is taken to make clear that the church has no axe to grind at such affairs. Specific legislation is seldom if ever discussed or mentioned. Informality and camaraderie are sought. Usually, there is a brief statement of Church interest and outlook, and of church council function, with broad reference to points where the Christian ethic may be involved. Guests at such affairs have been enthusiastic over the fellowship and the appreciation of the "troubles they bear" and have requested that it "be done again." There is good reason to believe that passage of certain legislation desired by the religious forces in this city was materially aided by this identifying process. Generally speaking, the church has not been as astute as it might in matters of this sort.

Get laymen to work

A second general principle involves the matter of education of church people to new outlooks and responsibilities. Here, in the pew, is a tremendous man-power potential, a great reservoir of strength. Traditional generalities, or absence of engineering particularization, have lulled this resource into a sleeping giant. It may be the high privilege of a church council to waken the giant and to bring it into action in the community. Various devices may be required. The Church Federation of Los Angeles has developed three which give promise of effectiveness.

One is a Voters' Guide which includes a printed summary of the replies given by candidates to pointed questions on public issues in which the Christian ethic is involved. These Guides are made available to the churches and the public for a nominal charge. The response at first was limited, both by candidates and by congregations. After the third year, candidates complain if their replies are not included. Churches are taking the printed document in quantities on assignment. Individuals are calling by phone for copies. Libraries are handling quantity lots. The resulting education within the Church concerning Christian concern in community matters and within the community regarding the Church as a community factor is significant.

Another device is known as a Church Members' Service Registry, patterned somewhat after the procedure in some of the service clubs. This is a four-page form to be used as a regular part of the process of reception into church membership. It provides an up-to-date grouping of church activities, with a break-down by which the member may select from a wide list the particular functions in which he feels fitted to engage. It includes a listing of personal relationships—family, vocational, social, community—to be checked, by which the church office will have an analysis of the congregation. And under the heading of "Community Relations," it lists areas of interest and action, paralleling the departments and commissions of the Church Federation, in which the church member may elect to work. It is contemplated that the groups of church members resulting from this elective process will be related to the appropriate functional group in the Church Federation,

* Executive Secretary, Church Federation of Los Angeles, California.

thus creating a lay working force in terms of community life. Study of community issues as the basis of Sunday night presentations by the different groups, and city-wide group meetings to be called by the Federation, result in education regarding the community pattern and in the discovery of new types of church action.

Perform public services

A third general principle involves the matter of public services to be performed by the agency of united church action. Fear is sometimes expressed that church councils purpose to build themselves to a place of independence from the other elements of church, if not to constitute another competitive denomination. Special thought must be given to the correction of this erroneous concept, but not to the neglect of certain services which are highly desirable in the interest of the community and which can be performed only by the agency of unity.

Some of these services will be symbolic only, as in the case of social case work. Obviously, the church cannot assume the total case-work load of a community. But it is desirable that the community know that the Church is concerned and that it can carry its portion of the task competently. Some of these public services will be for dramatic effect to enhance the Church, its message and ministry in the eyes of the community. Some of them will be for the purpose of revealing to a non-church going public the heart of the Church pertaining to great community problems: the care and training of children as manifested through the operation of weekday church schools on released time; the exercise of sound race relations as made manifest through race relations clinics; and the place of understanding and conciliation between conflicting elements in industry as illustrated in church-convened conferences of labor, management and church leaders.

In undertakings of this sort, thought must be given to utilize to the fullest degree the influence which results from the unity represented by the council but with caution in committing the individual units within the council upon controversial issues without specific authorization.

Do pioneer work

A fourth general principle is that a church council may "run interference" for the churches and denominations in terms of community functions, with the recognition that such functions may be taken over ultimately as functions of the local churches or denominations. This has happened in some instances with regard to vacation church schools, leadership training schools, etc. It is pertinent to note, however, that this local church initiative does not always endure. Sometimes the insight of the council leaders that such functions are best performed unitedly comes to be accepted by the local church and the function is restored to the agency of united action. A different situation is encountered in the case of Good Friday services, in which case the council takes the initiative to get the idea established but with recognition that the largest value will result when every church is able to conduct its own well-attended Good Friday service.

Uphold the prestige of the Church

A fifth principle may be listed; namely, that the council must see to the dignity and the good name of the church before the community. Under the principles of liberty and variety, there are certain to be excesses, vagaries, and practices which the non-church professional community will regard as sub-standard. The church of today is experiencing serious handicap and loss because these skilled community leaders dismiss the church with a shrug and a cynical question, "What more can you expect from a church?" Due to this unfortunate situation, for which the church itself is responsible, great areas of human interest and service have been all but lost to the church. In these instances, a community pattern detrimental to the church is almost set, as in the case of professional social welfare work.

Snyder from Monkmeyer

Church members active in community organizations such as the P.T.A. should identify themselves as church members.

It is the function of the church council to sense these reflections upon the Church and to engineer processes by which to correct them. The manner by which the church council is administered will, in itself, be an important witness at this point. The mannerisms and the public expressions of the executive are of great importance. The ability of a council to be judicious, or to say "no" with regard to the number and nature of crusades to which it lends itself, to reveal that it can support its actions with a sound philosophy, to devise and maintain high standards, to minister with dignity to those of both high and low estate, to be cooperative without loss of independence, to mingle with "publicans and sinners" without cant but without compromise of principle—all these are elements in the strategy of building a good name for Protestantism in the community.

Protestantism has made little more than a beginning at the matter of building itself into the community pattern. Such favor as the Church now enjoys in these relationships is due more to a charitable disposition on the part of community leaders than of merit in terms of present standards of community service. The Church must undertake to overcome this lag without delay. The community is the new frontier of the Church.

A day of religion in high school

By Albert W. Farmer*

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO have 2500 high school students from the farms and villages of the Middle West for a whole day of religious activity? Just a bit frightening, isn't it, in spite of its opportunity?

But that's the number who attended High School Religious Emphasis Day in Missouri during the spring of 1946. Over half of them were young people unreached by the local churches. Many of them have little opportunity to attend Sunday school. And it was an increase of 400 per cent over the 1945 attendance.

Of course, all of them were not in one group. They met in their own schools, in familiar surroundings, with their own friends, on a school day. There were 86 at Sheridan, nearly 300 at Mt. Vernon, about 200 at Kahoka. In a dozen other communities similar groups gathered, just as they do five days every week. But instead of algebra and English and music this day they studied applied Christianity.

A school superintendent starts it

At Kahoka it was the third year for such a day. Back in 1943 Superintendent Richard St. Clair discovered that less than half his students had any church connection. Among the ones who rode the big, yellow buses every morning and night the number in church was almost negligible. Most country churches were closed except for funerals and an annual revival meeting. Few parents came to the town churches, so the children had no transportation. The adult indifference and the other-worldly emphasis of the revivals combined to make youth disdainful of religion. The church was a convenient place from which to bury people, but not a place for modern young people to receive help for daily living.

Now, Mr. St. Clair was active in his own church. He was also president of the Clark County Council of Churches. Above all, he was concerned about his students. So he wrote the director of youth work of the state council.

"Instead of a County Christian Youth Conference, bringing together a handful of church young people on a Saturday or Sunday," he urged, "can't we plan a non-sectarian religious program for the high school? If you'll suggest a program and furnish some leaders, I'll turn an entire school day over to you to reach these boys and girls where they are. The purpose of the day should be to help these youngsters realize that real Christianity is not old-fashioned, that it can help them today, and that they should become active in the churches of their choice."

Naturally, the Missouri Council of Churches jumped at the chance. A program was developed and one snowy day in early February, 1944, Missouri's first Religious Emphasis Day in a smaller high school was held at Kahoka.

It was an immediate success, in spite of the protests of one minister who had refused to cooperate. The students voted to repeat it the next year. Teachers believed that it greatly improved the school spirit and made a difference in some of their "problem cases." Ministers reported more young people attended church on following Sundays and took a greater interest in their youth organizations. In 1945 Kahoka held its second Religious Emphasis Day, and three near-by towns, chiefly on Mr. St. Clair's recommendation, were added. On the basis of this experimentation the state council enlisted additional leaders and made its help available to any community that wanted it.

Essentially, the program continues to follow the principles of the first day at Kahoka, although local adaptations are encouraged. A spirit like that of a young people's summer conference is sought; "churchiness" is avoided. The 1946 theme, "Christ's Way of Life," was selected by the prospective leaders, some twenty ministers and laymen, who met last October for a day's conference in Jefferson City.

The day's program is varied

Let's visit one of these Religious Emphasis Days. Too many adults are not encouraged to attend, but perhaps if we are very quiet Superintendent R. O. Moore will let us slip into the one at Albany. The high school enrollment here is about 250, close to the maximum for this intensive program to be successful.

Mr. Moore is a bit jittery about the day, but when the leader from the state council arrives he finds everything well prepared. The plan was first approved by the churches who then secured Mr. Moore's cooperation. After the faculty, school board and student council had approved, a committee of students, teachers and church representatives was put in charge, and Mr. Moore accepted the chairmanship. The committee adapted the program to Albany's needs and selected its leader from the state council list.

The students have first gone to their home-rooms to take the roll, but now the bell rings for assembly. After the usual presentation of the colors, Mr. Moore introduces the guest leader. Any fears the students may have that they are in for a day of "dry, old preaching," disappear as he informally leads a few songs before moving into the keynote address, "Objective—Life!" He stresses the investment of men and God in our lives, and shows how we can attain real freedom only through daily allegiance to God.

"We're here today," he concludes, "to find out more about this way of real life as it relates to us, right here and now. In the separate groups that follow you will go down the line on some area of your daily experience in which the Christian way is important to you. You have already registered for the group you want to attend. Let's see, in the next hour, what we can find out that will make us better able to reach our objective of life."

We won't attend these separate groups. The students will feel more free if there are no adults looking on. Here in Albany they've set up seven groups dealing with such subjects as: "A Life or a Living," "Home Is What We Help to Make It," "Love Can Be Lovely," "The Odds Are

* Director of Youth Work, Missouri Council of Churches, Springfield, Missouri.

Against You (in liquor and gambling)," and "World Peace Begins in Me." A committee of students chose the adult leaders from a list submitted by the pastors. The guided conversation and discussion methods are being used by most of them.

At the end of the hour we are back in the gym for a talk by a layman on, "Religion Does Help." This is followed by a panel discussion by six outstanding students, a teacher, a minister and the guest leader, as chairman, on "The Kind of a World We Want to Live in," with emphasis on the place of Christian youth in making this world. The discussion is at its height when the lunch bell rings.

Albany is doing something unique about lunch. Each of the four churches is serving this noon, and complimentary tickets have been given to all students, indicating the church to attend. Although it is only the basement, this is the first time some have been in a church in years.

Another check-in period opens the afternoon, and then students go to different ones of the separate study groups. Wait a minute; what are these twenty students doing here? Mr. Moore explains that special studies were provided for any who did not want to attend the program or whose parents had any objections. The number is a little larger than usual due to one boy who has quite a following. But no one is compelled by the school to be exposed to religion. That seems to be the understanding of the law.

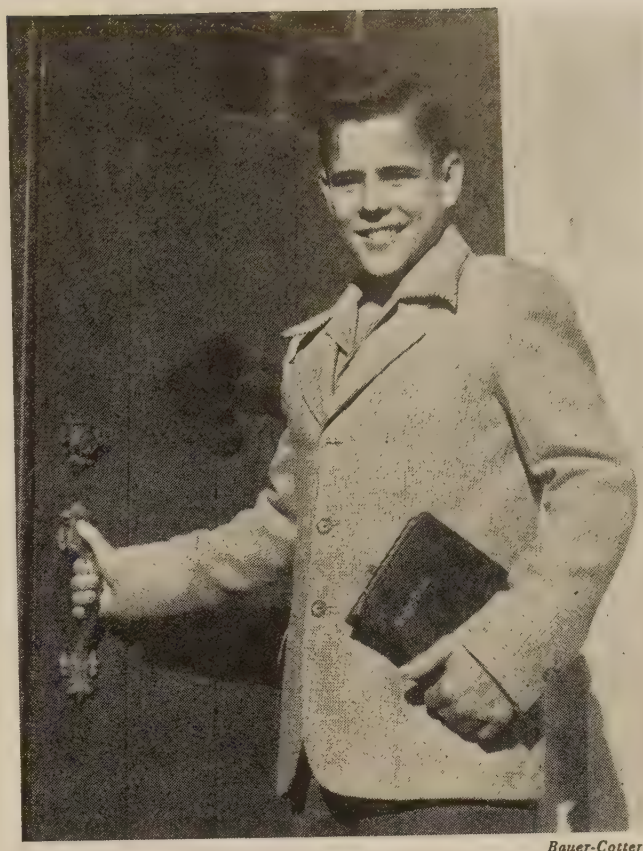
Now we're back in the gym for a recreation period. A grand-march, a couple of easy folk-games, and the singing of rounds, fun-songs and spirituals help dispel any doubts about Christianity's being a happy religion. The state program called then for a symposium on some of the helps of religion; the Bible, prayer and the church. Albany is showing a religious movie instead.

The day is almost over and the students are getting restless. But they quiet expectantly as Zimmerman's, "Christ and the Fishermen," is projected on the screen, and a student quartet begins to sing, "Jesus Calls Us." Students read the Scripture lesson and tell a bit about the picture. An adaptation of Barton Hunter's prose-poem, "Listen, You!" brings a startling challenge to live the Christian way. The prayer of dedication follows, providing opportunity for each to make his own silent dedication of life and decide on next steps to take. No public commitment is asked, but the quiet, thoughtful way in which the young people leave, indicates some high resolves. A few students talk with the guest leader about their future plans, and he tries to help them, urging them to talk with their pastors.

More schools will try it

Well, that's it! "We'd like this again, next year," Mr. Moore is saying. "While we're not in a position to teach religion in the school, this at least lets the students know that we approve of it and believe it is important. And in Albany, like in most Missouri towns, where we're almost 100 per cent Protestant if we're anything, there's nothing about such an inter-denominational project that anyone can object to."

It's on that basis that the Missouri Council is making its plans for next year. Religious Emphasis Days will be held in most of the schools that had them in 1946. From interest already shown at least as many more communities will take the initiative and ask for help in such a program. Instead of 2500, the school year of 1946-47 will probably see two or three times that many students reached with a Christian



Bauer-Cotterell

Are the churches ready to work with one another and with the school to reach young people with the impact of religion?

message, in their own schools, on their own terms and geared to the thinking and needs of modern life.

Church leaders in the state are now saying, as did an executive of a denomination which is not a member of the council, that if nothing else were done this would justify the council's existence. But some of us are remembering with appreciation that it was a school-man who was concerned about the whole development of his students rather than with church attendance statistics who started the movement in his own school. With school leaders like these who have welcomed this opportunity eagerly, we may look for a new day in the impact of religion upon our youth. That is—we may if the churches are ready to work with one another and with the school to put the lives of young people first.

A Double Action Gift

A subscription to the *International Journal* to the teachers of your church school for Christmas not only recognizes their fine work during the year, but also "pays dividends in interest and increased teaching efficiency."

The Federated Church of Pomeroy, Ohio remembered its teachers this way last Christmas and Mrs. Ralph Keuther, Parish Worker, writes: "Enthusiastic thanks which have come into the study from these teachers indicate that the gift is gratefully received and is giving inspiration and help to them."

See SPECIAL CHRISTMAS RATES, page 35.

The Bible belongs to everyone

Suggestions for Universal Bible Sunday

By Lillian Williams

AS THE ORGAN PLAYED the processional hymn and the congregation rose to sing, the choir marched in. This was to be expected; but following the choir there was a processional such as had never before been seen in the Calvary Presbyterian Church on Chicago's west side. There were people of thirty-three different nations, all the world around, dressed in native costume, each carrying a Bible in the language of his native land. They all filed up on the platform and took their seats.

The Bible in many tongues

After the Doxology and the Invocation, the pastor, Rev. George C. Crowell, welcomed to the church this group of fellow Christians representing foreign-speaking Protestant churches in Chicago. The Bulgarian minister, Rev. Z. D. Vidoloff, who had arranged the program, then introduced the visitors, one by one, telling his or her name, nationality, and church, and called on each to read a verse from his own Bible in his own language. The readings were interspersed with music by the choir.

These fellow Christians were from the Albanian Christian Society, the Armenian Congregational Church, the First Russian Baptist Church, the First Methodist Spanish-Mexican Church, the Hungarian Evangelical and Reformed Church, the First Greek Evangelical Church, the John Huss Bohemian Methodist Church—and many others. As the Scripture passages were read in Armenian, Assyrian, Greek, Albanian, Russian, Hungarian, Slovak, Persian, Spanish, French, Bambara (African), Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and other languages, the many-generation Americans in the pews began to feel more and more warmly their kinship with the first and second generation Americans on the platform. All were fellow-Christians, even fellow-Protestants, though some had come from the ends of the earth.

After the sermon and the closing hymn, this feeling of friendship was increased by a fellowship period in the church parlors. One of the ladies in the church, Miss Anna Grace Sawyer, had called on families of various nationalities and persuaded them to bake cookies, scones and cakes according to their homeland recipes. These were served, together with coffee, to church members and visitors. The foreign Bibles were placed on a table where they could be examined by those interested in seeing what favorite Bible passages looked like in other tongues. There were interpreters for those who did not speak English, and a happy spirit of friendship prevailed.

This service has been held as a Pentecost All-Nations Christian Service in the springs of 1943, 1944 and 1945 in Chicago, but it would be equally appropriate as an observance for Universal Bible Sunday on December 8 this year. Most towns and cities have residents of other nations, though there may not be enough of them to form their own churches, and many of these people have Bibles in their ancestral tongues. They could be invited to church and asked to bring their Bibles and read from them, and thus help to emphasize the world-wide spread of the Christian gospel.

World-wide Bible reading program

Reading about the Bible does not take the place of reading it. One of the main tenets of Protestantism has been that of making the Bible accessible to the people. This principle, indeed, has been the chief motive of mass education—that everyone would be able to read the Bible for himself. Anything, therefore, that encourages more Bible reading, even among church people, is worthy of promotion.

The theme of the 1946 Universal Bible Sunday Observance is "The Word of Power for a Power Age." One of the features of the observance, which is sponsored by the American Bible Society, is a world-wide Bible reading program to be carried on between Thanksgiving and Christmas. By this plan people all over the world read the same Bible selections daily. Bookmarks on which the daily readings are listed are available in quantity from the offices of the American Bible Society.[1] It is expected that the distribution of the bookmarks will top last year's high of 20,000,000. During the war years, members of the U. S. Army and the U. S. Navy formed a large bulk of the readers participating in the daily program, the bookmarks being supplied to them by their chaplains in all parts of the world. This year, the members of the Occupation Forces will be reached in a similar way. The material will also be distributed by the Society's office in Geneva, Switzerland, as well as its other foreign agencies.

An inter-racial service

In Cleveland it has been the custom for the past twelve years to have a special inter-racial and interdenominational service on the afternoon of Universal Bible Sunday. This has been sponsored by the American Bible Society, whose secretary is the Rev. V. C. Hodges, and by the Cleveland Church Federation. Practically all the Protestant Churches in Greater Cleveland cooperate in this service. Each year the program is alternated so that when the guest speaker and the choir are Negroes, the service is held in a white church, and when the guest speaker and the choir are white the service is held in a Negro church.

Films and exhibits

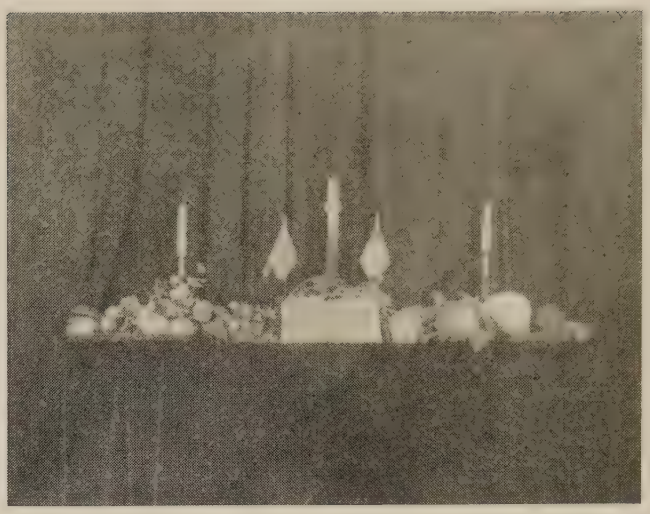
The American Bible Society has a number of attractive loan exhibits and displays, such as the world map with ten cut-out pictures and sample scriptures from the languages used in various countries. There are also sample cards of other languages, facsimile pages of early English editions, and other fascinating material.[1] Films and slides available from the Society are listed under "Films for Church Use" on page 39 of this issue.

[1] The main office of the American Bible Society is at Bible House, 450 Park Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. There are branch houses in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, D. C., Richmond, Cleveland, Atlanta, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Denver, and San Francisco, in the United States, and at Bible House, 16 College Street, Toronto, Canada.

We thank thee, Lord

A harvest home festival for the Thanksgiving season

By Ormal B. Trick*



"For all the food to nourish life, we thank thee, Lord."

THIS PAGEANT OF WORSHIP is arranged to be given in the chancel of the church or chapel, but may be adapted to a department room with a worship center. It may be used as a special church school Thanksgiving service, by a youth fellowship, or at the Sunday morning worship service.

On the altar, at the beginning of the service, are a cross and lighted candles. The Girl at the Altar places the various offering upon it.

The readings may be given by two or more speakers or by a verse speaking choir. One of the speakers may be the Minister, as indicated in the service, but if desired he may read the Scripture rather than the readings. The Reader or Readers giving the scripture passages may stand at the sides of the chancel, or, if preferred, in the body of the church.

Those standing within the chancel, including the Girl at the Altar, should wear choir or ministerial robes. Those bringing the gifts may either be robed or wear dresses of harmonizing colors. The program should be rehearsed, to be sure that it is given with dignity and assurance.

The Choir enters, singing "O Worship the King," while the Minister and Reader take their places and the Altar Girl comes down the aisle and stands at the left of the altar.

MINISTER:
With thankful hearts we come, O lord,
To worship thee this day,
To count the blessings of the year,
And raise our songs of praise.

READER: "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." [1]

MINISTER:
Long ago, the Pilgrim Fathers,
Driven by their urge for freedom,
Sought this land and in the clearing,
Near the rock bound coast, made their dwelling.
There they labored, there they suffered.
Cold and long the dreary winter,
Dark their hopes and great their longings.
But when harvest came, and autumn,
Then, they called a day for feasting.
With the Red Men of the forest
Praised they God the Heavenly Father,
And with truly thankful hearts,
Kept the glad Thanksgiving.

For Pilgrim Fathers who sailed the sea,
For sturdy pioneers who trod the wilderness,
For men and women who have lived and died
To make the nation great,
For America, our country,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." [2]

"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.[3]

The Choir sings the second stanza of "America the Beautiful." A girl comes down the aisle with a small American flag, which she gives to the Girl at the Altar, who places it at the right of the cross. (If preferred, a large American flag may be brought by a color bearer and placed on its stand at the right of the altar.)

MINISTER:
For the Church,
Its message glorious,
With its hope of life victorious,
We thank thee, Lord.
For its saints and martyrs,
Bearing witness down the ages;
For the heroes of the cross,
Facing winter's cold
Or desert's burning heat.
For the Church of Christ,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."[4]

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God."[5]

The Choir sings the fifth stanza of "For the Beauty of the Earth," (the one beginning, "For thy church"). A girl comes down the aisle with a small Christian flag, which the Girl at the Altar places at the left of the cross. (If preferred, a large Christian flag may be brought by a color bearer and placed on its stand at the left of the altar.)

MINISTER:
For autumn's beauty;
For all the glory of the fields and forest,
When all the hills in grandeur stand,
And blue haze touches the distant land;
For golden leaves,
For crimson leaves,
For leaves emblazed with bronze,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the sea, and established it upon the floods."[6]

The Choir sings the first stanza of "This Is My Father's World." A girl comes down the aisle with autumn leaves which the Girl at the Altar places at one side and at the back of the altar.

MINISTER:
For golden grains that bent their heads before the wind,
And ripened on the hills of summer;
For gathered grain,
Harvested through the weary hours of labor
To become food to feed the hungry of the world;
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."[7]

The Choir sings the first stanza of "We Plow the Fields," as a girl with a bundle of grain enters and comes down the aisle. The Girl at the Altar places it at one side at the back of the altar.

MINISTER:
For fruits that ripened in the autumn sun,
And felt the touch of cooling mists,
Before the days of winter come;
For fruits all crimsoned red,
Or luscious gold;
For fragrant clusters
Of purple grapes,—
For these thy gifts,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing."[8]

(Continued on page 29)

* Sherwood, Oregon.

Angels of the light

A Christmas pageant

By Virginia Wheeler Christie*

Characters

BLUE ANGEL, TWO GOLD ANGELS } The Nativity Angels, who do most of the speaking

CASPAR, MELCHIOR, BALTHAZAR } The Wise Men

MARY, JOSEPH, TWO CHERUBS, SHEPHERD LADS } Non-speaking

ANGEL CHOIR in white and gold

Setting

In the center of the platform, slightly elevated from the platform level, if possible, is the manger setting under a rough canopy. No curtains are used. Two other small playing spaces are required, lighted separately from the stage by a spot-light or small flood-light. These may be on either end of the platform, or on the auditorium floor level, in front or at the sides of the room. See Production Comments at the end.

As the house lights darken, the angel choir is heard singing "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." They enter, a procession of white and gold angels, carrying lighted candles, and continue singing until they reach the section reserved for them. Following the smallest angels the NATIVITY ANGELS *enter with arms crossed over their breasts. As the* ANGEL CHOIR *reaches its section, the three* NATIVITY ANGELS *mount the platform in single file, with the* BLUE ANGEL *in the center. At center stage they turn front, the* GOLD ANGELS *kneel, facing each other, and with arms still folded across their breasts, the three* NATIVITY ANGELS *speak together:*

NATIVITY ANGELS: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL *(raising her upstage arm, and dropping her other arm to her side):* In the beginning. . . . the world rested from its struggle of birth. And it was good. Then came light and darkness, land and sea, and all living things. And it was good. Last came man . . . but men could not live happily together. There came times of war and times of suffering, between the times of peace. Through the ages it has been the same.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL *(raising her upstage arm, and dropping her other arm to her side):* In the beginning . . . men knew not the Way of Life. Then God, pitying human need, gave of himself to send his Son into the world, to be the Light of life; but the people did not follow the light that was given to them. Now, once again, although the clamor of battle has ceased, the tragedy of famine and disease following in the wake of war is abroad upon the earth.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL *(raising her downstage arm half-way):* Will these wars and famines never cease?

SECOND GOLD ANGEL *(raising her downstage arm half-way):* Cannot the world learn to live in peace?

BLUE ANGEL *(arms outstretched toward the kneeling angels):* Be not discouraged; for so long as men celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace, then is hope kept alive and bright that the Word of God's love will one day fill all human hearts. Then justice, tempered by mercy, will be the guiding light of all mankind . . . and there shall be peace. *(Pause)* It is Christmastide, and o'er all the world, the spirit of love is born anew.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL *(lowering arms):* New every year. . . .

SECOND GOLD ANGEL *(lowering arms):* New born and newly dear. . . .

BLUE ANGEL *(lowering arms):* He comes with tidings and a song. . . .

ALL THREE ANGELS *(crossing arms on breast):* The ages long, the ages long.

The kneeling angels rise, turn towards the audience, and all three step forward, letting their arms fall to their sides.

NATIVITY ANGELS: God's messengers are we, sent from above; to tell you again of God's great love.

BLUE ANGEL *(stepping forward, towards right stage, and looking off in the distance as if she could see the village before her):* Lo, it is evening in Bethlehem. People are hurrying to their homes; the smell of food is on the air. Merchants have wrapped up their wares and have gone home. There are many strangers in the village. They seek lodgings where best they can; hurrying, scurrying, each eager to find shelter and rest for the night. Slowly the streets of the village empty and become silent. Now and again a light from a doorway brightens the street for a moment as a late-comer enters his house. There are some late travelers coming down the road.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL *(stepping forward, towards left stage, and peering out under her upraised hand):* They are . . . the holy travelers. A man—

SECOND GOLD ANGEL *(stepping forward beside the* FIRST GOLD ANGEL, *also looking out):* 'Tis Joseph.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: A woman . . . riding.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: 'Tis Mary. How tired she looks after her long hours of travel from Nazareth!

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: Joseph approaches a nearby lodging. He knocks at the door.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: There's a voice within—"No room here."

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: Turned away. Cannot they see the weariness in the travelers' faces?

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: They who will not, cannot see.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: On they plod. They reach the inn.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: Again Joseph knocks at the door.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: Perhaps there, the poor lady may rest.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: Alas, again, that fateful voice—

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: "No room here!"

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: But wait, a daughter of the house comes out.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: She sees Mary . . . she speaks to her.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: She is showing them a place to rest!

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: 'Tis a stable, where the beasts are kept!

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: But spread about is clean, fresh hay.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: It will make a soft bed for those tired ones.

(The BLUE ANGEL *goes back to center stage directly in front of the manger during the following speeches.)*

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: It is cold outside, but warm and clean within.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: Joseph fixes a place for his Mary to rest.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: Gratefully she lies on the sweet-smelling hay.

(The GOLD ANGELS *go upstage to positions on either side of the* BLUE ANGEL.*)*

BLUE ANGEL *(arms outstretched):* It is a holy night. All the world has settled down to rest. *(Stage lights dim to a low light)* The stars shine bright on the Bethlehem hill. It is a night of mystery. For a new life is beginning—a new life that will change the ways of mankind. A new life that will become the light of the world. *(During the following, we hear faint strains of the "Sanctus." The* THREE NATIVITY ANGELS *raise their arms high, so that their wings cover the manger scene.* MARY, JOSEPH, *and the* TWO CHERUBS *take their position in the manger.)* It seems as if the air is filled with heavenly music. Never have the stars shone so brightly against the midnight heavens; the cattle rest; men sleep . . . and in the quietness a new sound is heard . . . a baby's cry!

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: [1]"Oh, joy of Heaven! Lift every heart!

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: "Sing, O ye morning stars, ye sons of God, shout in your joy.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: "Lift your voices; cry in the dawn. A star is shining, a star of morn.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: "Lift your voices, a song rings clear; 'tis heaven's music, that earth may hear.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: About and about the starry way, they flash the dawning of this New Day.

SECOND GOLD ANGEL: "Far hence and near the music sounds, from earth's dark shadows to heaven's bounds.

FIRST GOLD ANGEL *(folding her arms across her breast):* "I will fold my wings. . . .

SECOND GOLD ANGEL *(folding her arms across her breast):* "I will show this sight. . . .

BLUE ANGEL *(folding her arms across her*

* Mrs. J. Sayre Christie, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

[1] The following section was taken from "The Nativity with Angels" by Margaret Cropper. Published by the Oxford University Press, England. Used by permission.

breast, and stepping towards right, upstage, as the GOLD ANGELS *also step aside, right and left):* "I will uncover the Light of Light!"

(The lights come up on the manger scene, disclosing MARY *seated behind the manger, with* JOSEPH *in the left background. One* CHERUB *stands at the foot of the manger, with hands clasped. The other* CHERUB *kneels in front of the manger at the head. The* ANGEL CHOIR *sings "There's a Song in the Air." At the second verse the* NATIVITY ANGELS *rise, the* BLUE ANGEL *coming forward to the right corner of the canopy, and the* GOLD ANGELS *stepping back and slightly downstage, and stand until the song ends.)*

BLUE ANGEL: There are shepherds abiding on yonder hill. Messenger of God, tell them of this glorious birth.

(First GOLD ANGEL *makes her way to the place of the shepherds while the choir sings one verse of "Angels from the Realms of Glory." The light comes up on the* SHEPHERDS *who are discovered asleep. As the song concludes, they waken, but fall back in fear to see the angel.)*

FIRST GOLD ANGEL: "Fear not, for behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger."

(The ANGEL CHOIR *repeats the chorus, the* SHEPHERDS *pantomine their decision to go to Bethlehem, and start off. As they approach the manger, the choir sings the second verse of "Angels from the Realms of Glory." The shepherds kneel before the manger, and at the conclusion of the verse and chorus, rise and leave the platform. The* FIRST GOLD ANGEL *returns to her place on the platform by another way.)*

BLUE ANGEL: Far in the east are three men seeking this Holy Place. Thou, messenger of God, guide them to it.

(The SECOND GOLD ANGEL *leaves the platform as the lights come up on the place where the three* WISE MEN *gather.)*

MELCHIOR: What think you of the one we are seeking? I believe he will be a king, greater in might, and power, and splendor than any the world has known. All people will be subject unto him. I shall set my gift before him—gold for his kingship; gold for the King of Kings.

CASPAR: You speak well, friend Melchior, with youthful wisdom. But I believe the One we seek is more than a worldly king, for he will rule men's souls. I look to him to reveal God's divine will for men. He will be worthy of our worship. Therefore I take him frankincense, for his deity. What do you think, good Balthazar?

BALTHAZAR: Both of you speak with wisdom. I believe he will be a great king, and a ruler with the Infinite, and we will honor and worship him. But I see heartbreak too, for he will be close to his people and know their sorrows and tribulations. He will suffer for his people. I therefore take him myrrh, the symbol of sorrow. Yet, in his divinity, I believe this one will rise above our mortal tribulations.

(The SECOND GOLD ANGEL *appears carrying a star high above her head.)*

MELCHIOR: Behold the star! Come, let us follow it.

(The SECOND GOLD ANGEL *leads the way to the manger, placing the star high above it. As the* WISE MEN *approach, the* ANGEL CHOIR *sings the third verse of "Angels from the Realms of Glory." Each* WISE MAN *kneels as he offers his gift in adoration. At the end of the chorus, they leave the platform.)*

GOLD ANGELS *(speaking together, arms partly outstretched):* Holy, holy, holy is the Lord. All the world is full of his glory.

BLUE ANGEL *(arms partly outstretched):* Great are thy works, thy creations, O God. Great are thy ways among men.

GOLD ANGELS *(raising arms a little higher):* Glory to God in the highest. . . .and on earth. . . .peace.

BLUE ANGEL *(raising arms a little higher):* Giver of all good gifts, deep is our gratitude; our gratitude for star, for song, for thy Son.

GOLD ANGELS *(raising arms still higher):* Glory to God in the highest, and on earth . . . .peace.

BLUE ANGEL *(arms outstretched):* Thy spirit finds not a crowded inn, but a welcome home within our lives.

GOLD ANGELS *(arms outstretched upwards):* Glory to God in the highest, and on earth . . . peace.

(The ANGEL CHOIR *sings the first verse of "O Come All Ye Faithful," and the three angels come center in front of the manger. The lights in the manger go out, and the manger characters exit, as they entered, hidden from view by the angels' wings. At the conclusion of the hymn the three angels fold their arms across their breasts and coming forward to the front of the platform speak together.)*

NATIVITY ANGELS:

"Although the child of Mary sent from heaven on high,
In his manger cradle, may no longer lie. . .
Love is King forever, though the proud world scorn;
If ye truly seek him, Christ your King is born!"[2]

(As the NATIVITY ANGELS *leave the platform the strains of "Sanctus" are again heard.)*

Production Comments

Setting: Inasmuch as the manger scene is the high spot of the pageant, every effort should be made to make the setting beautiful. A rough canopy adds a great deal, and is not too difficult to fashion. It should, of course, be proportioned to the size of the stage, but the following dimensions have proved satisfactory.

The raised platform upon which the manger scene is set can be 4 x 6 feet, and should be raised about one foot from the stage level. It should be placed against the back wall, if possible. Two saplings or pieces of rough lumber, approximately seven feet in length, are used as the front corners of the canopy. They should be set about six inches away from the front corners of the platform, and for support can be attached to the platform by strips of wood. A frame made of tomato stakes attached to the two posts in front, and to the rear wall (or similar posts 8 feet in length, at the back corners of the raised platform) supports the roof of the canopy. There should be a slope to the roof of one to one and one-half feet from back to front. A beaver board foundation attached to the frame, plus straw and small saplings or rough lath, can be easily arranged to simulate a thatched roof. If the underside of the beaver board is painted white, it will help with the illumination of the scene. One or two steps in front of the raised platform help in making pleasing groups of characters, but could be omitted. A dark floor covering, strewn with straw enhances the picture, and a black curtain hung at the back, behind the setting, gives depth.

The manger itself may have straw showing underneath the cloth draped in it. Inside, concealed from the audience, is a light which illuminates Mary's face. A small stool is behind the manger, on which Mary sits.

A dark folding screen on either side of the setting, and about two and one-half feet from the back wall, gives additional coverage for the manger characters to take their places.

No special setting is required for the other two playing spaces (shepherds' and wise men's).

Lighting: The manger scene must be lighted separately from the rest of the stage. It should be a soft light, but bright enough to show the characters clearly. The two playing spaces can each be lighted with a single spotlight or small floodlight. It is effective if the spot on the shepherds' playing space is so focused that the center of light is on the angel, when she appears.

Costumes: The Nativity Angels' costumes should be of non-transparent material which will drape well. Outing flannel is rich looking, but rayon or cotton fabrics would also serve. Three widths of material, each three yards long, are sewed together lengthwise. The garment is then folded in half, and a neck opening made on the fold, in the center of the middle panel. This opening should be large enough to slip over the head, and may be bound or gathered with a drawstring. While still folded in half, a close-fitting "sleeve" is stitched in from the outer edge about ten inches, and the stitching is then carried straight down to the bottom of the garment. This "sleeve" should be just large enough to get the hand through, and should fit the forearm rather snugly. The garment is then put on, and the balance of the width of material is draped in soft folds, 2 to 3 inches wide, from the neckline, across the shoulder and arms. These folds should be tacked across the top. The costumes should be just above floor length when the arms are stretched out shoulder high. A stencilled design about the neck and at the edge of the robe may be added for a more splendid effect. The colors should be rich, not pale.

Each of these angels wears a halo, made from wire (No. 9 copper wire is suggested). The halo is made from a single piece of wire, about 50 inches long, bent into two circles, attached at one point. The inner, smaller circle (about 20 inches of the wire) fits the head, while the larger circle (27 to 30 inches of the wire) bound in yellow or gold ribbon, becomes the halo proper, and can be adjusted to an attractive angle. Directions for making a more elaborate halo can be found in *Biblical Costume*, by Logan Wright. In the same book is a partial sketch of the angel costume above-described.

(Continued on page 37)

[2] Source unknown.

Worship Programs

DECEMBER

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Christmas Is Loving and Giving*

For the Leader

As Christian leaders may we help our children discover that we celebrate Christmas because it is Jesus' birthday, that we remember him because he is the Son of God and lived on the earth among people according to God's will, always trying to help others live that way, too. May we discover together that in the Christian world family, keeping Christmas is a universal custom and it draws us closer together as a world brotherhood. May we also discover that although Christmas is a special holiday and a time is set aside once a year to celebrate it, the spirit of Christmas can and should be kept every day of the year.

CHRISTMAS

When we think of Christmas
We think of warmth and light,
Of spicy pine trees, candles glowing bright.
We remember children's voices
Singing carols in the night.

When we think of Christmas
We think of star-lit skies,
Of shining wonder, love in children's eyes.
We remember tender gladness
That has come with sweet surprise.

When we think of Christmas
Our thoughts become a prayer
For joyous giving, thoughtful ways to share
The best we have with those in need
In our home and everywhere!

December 1

THEME: *Why Do We Have Christmas?*
WORSHIP CENTER: Picture of Jesus
PRELUDE: "Adeste Fidelis"
CALL TO WORSHIP: (Sing softly together the chorus of "Adeste Fidelis")
LEADER:

Of what holiday did the music remind you? Yes, of Christmas. It is a wonderful time of year, isn't it? Why do we celebrate Christmas? Yes, because it is Jesus' birthday; but why do we remember his birthday? What do you know about Jesus? (Have the children tell interesting things about Jesus' life; then the leader will tell some of the following stories, using pictures:)

"Jesus and the Children"—Matthew 19:13, 14
"Jesus and Zacchaeus"—Luke 19:1-9
"Jesus and the Fishermen"—Matthew 4:18-24
"Sermon on the Mount"—Luke 6:27-36

SONG: "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"[1]
OFFERING AND SONG: "Church Offering"[1]
PRAYER:

Dear God, our loving Father, we thank thee for thy Son, Jesus. We are glad for Christmas because it is a time set aside to remember Jesus. Help us to find the very best ways of keeping Christmas. As we remember all of Jesus' kindness and goodness to people, may we realize that one of the best ways of keeping Christmas is to show love toward others. Amen.

POSTLUDE: "Adeste Fidelis"

* Director of Weekday Church School, Zanesville, Ohio.

[1] *Sing, Children, Sing,* Edith Lovell Thomas, 1939

Primary Department

*By Frances M. Hill **

December 8

THEME: *Christmas Is Jesus' Birthday*
WORSHIP CENTER: Picture of Lerolle's "Arrival of the Shepherds," with lighted candles on each side of it. Decorate candle holders with pine and holly berries.
PRELUDE: "Adeste Fidelis"
CALL TO WORSHIP: (Sing softly together the chorus of "Adeste Fidelis")
PRAYER: Thank you, dear God, for Jesus. As we think about the way he lived among people, always loving them and helping them, may we have the desire to live that way, too. Amen.
OFFERING AND SONG: "Church Offering"[1]
LEADER:

We discovered that we celebrate Christmas because it is Jesus' birthday. Do you remember some of the reasons why we remember Jesus? (Give children time to recall some of the reasons). Are there any things that we do today at Christmas that help us to remember Jesus? Suppose you tell me some of them and I will print them on the board.

1. Look at Christmas pictures.
2. Sing Christmas carols.
3. Give presents.
4. Decorate our homes and churches.
5. Decorate Christmas trees.

You just said that one of the ways of keeping Christmas was to sing carols. The picture on our worship table reminds me of a Christmas carol. Can you think what it might be? ("Away In a Manger.") Our pianist will play it for us and then we will sing it together.

Are there any other carols that you would enjoy singing? (Sing together several favorite carols.) I wonder how these lovely carols happened to be written. Do you know? Yes, the people who wrote them read the story of Jesus' birthday and then wrote the carols. Where did they find the story? It is in story books, but even those writers read it somewhere else first. They first read it in the Bible. Two of Jesus' followers wrote about his birthday. I like to think that Jesus' followers loved him so much that they wanted others to know him and love Him, too. They really wrote about his whole life. The story of his birthday is one of the most beautiful stories in the Bible. Would you like to hear it?

CHRISTMAS STORY:

Luke 2:8-20 - read from Bible by leader.
Matthew 2:1-12 - told by leader in her own words.

SONG: "Silent Night"
POSTLUDE: "Adeste Fidelis"

December 15

THEME: *Christmas Around the World*
WORSHIP CENTER: Same as last week.
PRELUDE: "Silent Night"
CALL TO WORSHIP: Luke 2:8-14
SONG: "Silent Night"
LEADER: "Christmas around the World"

It is wonderful to be able to be here in church school and to celebrate Christmas together, isn't it? Just think, all over our city and all over our country boys and girls and their families will be celebrating Christmas, will be remembering Jesus' birthday. Do you suppose that people around the world will celebrate Christmas, too? (Use globe or map of the world.) Can any of you find where we live? Our city is in a country known as America. Sometimes we call our country the United States. Down here below the United States is another part of America. Do you know what it is called? Yes, South America. Some of the children in South America who like to remember Jesus' birthday have an unusual Christmas custom. A bag of presents is thrown into the air and the children strike it with sticks. As it breaks the children scramble for the contents.

Across the ocean we find a land known as Europe. Can you tell us the names of any of the countries of Europe? (France, Italy, Germany, etc.) We have spoken about the people in these countries before. There is much unhappiness there at the present time because of the results of the war. Do you know that many of our most loved Christmas customs and carols and pictures come from countries in Europe? Listen, and our pianist will play a Christmas carol from Austria, which is a country near Germany. ("Silent Night"). Suppose we hum it with the piano. Here is another, that came from Germany. ("Away in a Manger")

On our worship table is the lovely picture which we discussed last week. It was painted by a French artist.

(Show "Sistine Madonna" by Raphael.) This beautiful picture of Mary and Jesus was painted by an Italian artist.

Listen to this Christmas carol. It has come to us from our own country, America, and was written by a minister, Phillips Brooks. ("O, Little Town of Bethlehem")

If possible have someone sing a Christmas carol in the language of the country in which it was written, while the offering is being taken.

OFFERING
PRAYER:

O God, we are glad that in countries around the world there are people who remember that Christmas is the birthday of your Son, Jesus. We are thankful that these people have painted such beautiful pictures, written such wonderful music and verses and stories, and tried in so many ways to tell others about Jesus.

As we think of boys and girls around the world who love you, help us to remember that for many of these children this year, Christmas will not be as joyful as usual because they are without parents, homes and food. As we realize this may we keep Jesus' birthday by sharing with those who need us most. Amen.

POSTLUDE: "Silent Night"

December 22

THEME: *Keeping Christmas in a Christian Way*
WORSHIP CENTER: Picture of groups of children celebrating Christmas. (Suggestions: Children around the Christmas tree, Children singing carols, giving gifts, Worshipping in church and at home.)
PRELUDE: "Adeste Fidelis"
CALL TO WORSHIP: (Sing softly together the

chorus of "Adeste Fidelis." Leader will read the following thought written by a fifth grader.)

A Child's Christmas Thought[2]

We are glad for Christmas because it is Jesus' birthday!
He was strong and kind; I am sure that we want to be more like him every day in our work and play.
He helped other people as he taught them about God.
For that reason we should love him with all our hearts, remembering how he loved us.
We are glad for Christmas because it is Jesus' birthday!

Song: "His Birthday Song"[1]

Leader: "Loving and Giving"

If Christmas is a time to remember Jesus, it is a time for loving and giving, isn't it? Let us think of some of the best ways of keeping Christmas. As we mention them let's take time to really think about them.

1. Giving to others. Why do we give gifts? Some people think it is because the wise men gave gifts to Jesus, but I believe there is even a better reason than that. We give gifts because we love people and want to give them joy. There are many ways of giving, aren't there? Much giving doesn't always need money; it just needs time and a loving heart and willing service.
2. Caroling for shut-ins. (Plan to do this, if possible.)
3. Making gifts for others.
4. Attending church services.
5. Setting up a manger scene at home.

Story:

A Different Christmas[3]

I should like to tell you a story that was written by a little girl when she was in the fifth grade:

In Ruth's home they were going to celebrate Christmas in a different way. You could probably never guess how so I will tell you. On Christmas afternoon Ruth's family were going to visit one of Ruth's school friends to celebrate Christmas with her. They were going because Ruth knew this little girl at school and she wanted to take her a gift for Christmas. She wanted her mother and daddy to go with her because her little friend's father was no longer living and her mother was not very well. Ruth thought that Ann and her mother would like to know Ruth's mother and daddy, too.

"I am ready," cried Ruth.

"So am I," said Mother.

"I am, too," answered Father. So off they started. Finally they got to dismal twenty-second street. They walked and walked and everything was very quiet. There were not as many Christmas trees in the windows of the homes as there were on Ruth's street, and yet Ruth and her mother and father felt that there was Christmas in the air. As Ruth said, "You don't always have to have a Christmas tree to celebrate Christmas." At last they came to the house where Ruth's friend, Ann, lived. Ruth knocked at the door and Ann opened it.

"Oh, Ruth," she cried, "I am so glad to see you, won't you come in?"

"Thank you," said Ruth, "This is my mother and Daddy, Ann."

"I am very glad to know you," replied Ann. "Please come inside."

After they had stepped inside Ruth and her mother and Daddy noticed that Ann had been crying. She told them that her mother seemed to be very sick and that she was worried about her.

"If only Mother would get well," said Ann, "that would make Christmas for me."

Ruth's father happened to be a doctor so he went in to see Ann's mother. After a while Ruth's father came into the shabby living room and said to Ann, "Ann, your mother is very sick and she needs to be in the hospital; if she is there I feel quite certain that with the proper care she will get well."

He noticed that Ann started to explain so he quickly continued, "I will see that she gets into the hospital and has the proper care. I want to do this because I am your friend; we all are."

So Ann's mother was sent to the hospital and given the best of care. It was decided that Ann should stay with Ruth and her mother while her own mother was away.

Ruth and Ann had many happy times together. Finally, Ann's mother became well and was able to come home and in a few weeks was able to go back to work.

One day, not long after Ann had gone back home to live, Ruth was talking with her mother. She said, "Mother, Christmas Day is over, but I can still feel it. This has been a very different kind of Christmas, but it has been the best and the happiest we have ever had. I believe the reason is because Ann and I have each other and because Daddy helped Ann's mother to get well. I'm going to try to keep this Christmas feeling all year."

Offering and Song: "Church Offering"[1]

Prayer: Dear God, please help us to find ways of loving and giving during this wonderful Christmas season. Amen.

December 29

Theme: *Keeping Christmas All Year*

Worship Center: Same as last week.

Prelude: "Adeste Fidelis"

Call to Worship: Sing together "His Birthday Song"[1]

Offering and Song: "Church Offering"[1]

Leader:

I am sure that all of us have many happy experiences to share with one another. Would you like to talk a little bit about our Christmas experiences? (Give children time to express themselves; help them to recall their plans for Christmas and judge the things they really did do in the light of their former planning.) Do you suppose it would be possible to keep Christmas all year? It would be, wouldn't it, if keeping Christmas really means remembering Jesus by loving and giving?

I am going to give each of you a piece of paper and crayon and I would like you to draw a picture that will tell me one way that you think you might keep Christmas all year. Suppose you go to your tables to do this, and then we will come back here and talk about some of your ideas. (Give children about five minutes to do this under supervision of their teachers; then, have group come back to worship center with pictures and discuss some of them.)

Closing Prayer: Dear God, thank you for helping us to find ways of keeping Christmas all year. Forgive us for the times we have been thoughtless and please help us to be loving all of the time, even as Jesus always was. Amen.

Postlude: "Adeste Fidelis"

Junior Department

*By Mary Esther McWhirter**

Theme for December: *Christmas Gifts*

For the Leader

For junior boys and girls, Christmas is primarily a time of giving and of receiving gifts. These gifts are concrete, tangible objects which may be seen and handled. It is hoped that through these December services of worship, they will discover that there are also other kinds of Christmas gifts: art, music, poetry, customs, and stories which, coming to us from many peoples, enrich our own celebration of the Christmas season.

December 1

Theme: *Gifts from Germany*

Worship Center Suggestions: Place on the table a Christmas tree decorated with only silver icicles. Arrange cotton and artificial snow to cover the top of the worship table.

Prelude: Hymn tune, *Antioch*

Leader:

Joy to the *world!* the Lord is come! Christmas time is a time of great gladness, not only here in America, but also in every corner of the earth where the story of Jesus has been told. In many countries men and women and boys and girls are filled with joy at this Christmas season. As we think of them celebrating with us, let us sing, "Joy to the *World,*" emphasizing that last word.

Hymn: "Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come"

Choral Reading: (previously planned by one class group)

Unison: Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight.
Voice 1: Christmas in lands of the fir tree and pine,
Voice 2: Christmas in lands of the palm tree and vine,
Voice 3: Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white,
Voice 4: Christmas where cornfields lie sunny and bright,
Unison: Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight! (Phillips Brooks)

Listening Music: Hymn Tune, *Antioch*

Leader: "Christmas Trees"

All over the world people have sung their loveliest songs, painted their most beautiful pictures, and written their greatest poetry as they tried to tell what Christmas meant to them. Their gifts of music, pictures, and poetry have come to us from far away and long ago. As we worship together this month we shall enjoy some of these Christmas gifts, given to us by friends of other lands, some of whom lived many years ago.

Today we have on our worship center a tiny Christmas tree. Later this month there will be larger Christmas trees in our homes, here at church, at school, and in some of the stores. We have come to feel that Christmas

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[2] Shirley Dozer, grade five.

[3] Story adapted from one written by a fifth grader, Elaine Bates.

* Director of the Christian Education of Children, the New York State Council of Churches, Albany, New York.

just would not be Christmas without a tree. And yet, I wonder if we know that the idea of having a Christmas tree did not originate here in America, but came to us from Germany?

According to an old legend, Martin Luther was walking one winter night in the forest near his home. The bright light of the moon and stars made the snow covered pine trees brilliantly beautiful. He stopped to look, to wonder, and to worship. Speaking half aloud, he said: "My, how I wish that my children could see these pine trees. It would help them to worship, too." Then, suddenly he had an idea. "I'll cut down a tiny tree, take it home, and put candles on the branches. Then I shall again tell my children the story of the first Christmas."

Perhaps it was around the lighted tree, with the candles shining like stars, that Martin Luther sang with his children the lullaby which he wrote especially for them. Let us sing it now.

HYMN: "Away in a Manger"

From Germany, also, comes another gift of Christmas music—a song which is the very spirit of Christmas itself. Most of us learned to sing at least the first stanza before we went to school. Let us listen while the pianist plays the music. As we listen let us think of that first Christmas night: of the dark village of Bethlehem and of the rude stable where the baby Jesus was born.

LISTENING MUSIC: Hymn Tune, *Stille Nacht*

HYMN INTERPRETATION: "Silent Night"

The words of this Christmas hymn were written one hundred and twenty eight years ago by Joseph Mohr, who was assistant pastor at a church in a tiny German village. They were written as a Christmas gift for his friend, Franz Gruber, who was the church organist and who shared the same house. As Franz Gruber read the words he said: "What a beautiful poem. It ought to be set to music so that it could be sung."

That night after he went to bed, he kept thinking about the poem which his friend had written. As the words went through his mind, he thought out a tune which seemed to fit perfectly. Then, in the darkness and quiet of his room he began to sing: "Silent Night, Holy Night."

With amazement, Joseph Mohr listened from his bed in the next room. The poem which he had written was being sung! He joined his friend in singing the words which he himself had written.

That Christmas eve, a German pastor and organist wrote a Christmas hymn which has since then travelled around the world. This gift from Germany is for everyone who celebrates Christmas. Let us sing it.

HYMN: "Silent Night, Holy Night"

PRAYER: O God, we thank you that Jesus belongs to all of the world. We thank you for the gifts of music, art, and poetry, (coming from many nations) which help us to celebrate his birthday. Amen.

December 8

THEME: *Gifts from Italy*

WORSHIP CENTER SUGGESTIONS: Place on the worship table a large copy of "The Madonna of the Chair." Arrange evergreen boughs around it and place a tall red taper at each end of the table.

QUIET MUSIC: Hymn tune, *Stille Nacht*

CALL TO WORSHIP: (Child)

Love came down at Christmas
Love, all lovely, love divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Stars and angels gave the sign.

Response: (sung) "O, come let us adore Him"

HYMN INTERPRETATION: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

We have just sung the refrain of one of the oldest Christmas hymns which we know. No one is sure who wrote the words, but some people believe that it may have been an Italian priest who wrote this Christmas hymn for his congregation to sing. For several centuries, at least, it was sung in Latin. Later it was translated into English.

There is also much uncertainty about the origin of the music. It is generally thought that this tune is based on a chant used in the early Christian church—probably in Italy.

Though we wish we knew more about this hymn, we can nevertheless enjoy it as a gift from long ago, coming to us by way of Italy. As we think about the birth of Jesus we feel the same joy which we find reflected in both the words and music of this ancient hymn.

HYMN: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

PICTURE INTERPRETATION: "Madonna of the Chair"

From Italy we receive not only the gift of song, but also the gift of art. Here on our worship table this morning is a painting from the brush of the artist Raphael. There is a legend which tells us that one day Raphael was walking past some peasants' cottages. In the door-way of one sat a sweet-faced mother, holding a plump, dark-eyed baby on her lap. An older child crowded close, looking up at his mother and baby brother. As Raphael looked at the little group, he said: "What a lovely family! Why, it's lovely enough for a Madonna."

Then an idea came to him. "It *shall* be just that—a Madonna." Then, to his dismay, he realized that he had no paints and no canvas with him. He felt in his pockets and there, sure enough, was a piece of charcoal. He looked about for something on which he could draw. Suddenly he spied an old barrel top. It was smooth and round. With quick sure strokes he sketched on it the picture: the mother, baby, and older child. Then he took the barrel top home and later transferred this picture to a sheet of canvas, using paints which made it glow with rich, soft color.

Today as we celebrate Christmas we are grateful for this Madonna given to us by an Italian artist. As we look at this picture, let us sing the refrain of the hymn which has also come to us from Italy.

REFRAIN: (sung) "O Come, Let Us Adore Him"

PRAYER: Dear God, we thank you for those of every land who, skilful with pen, with brush, and with voice, help us to know the meaning of Christmas. Amen.

December 15

THEME: *Gifts from England*

WORSHIP CENTER SUGGESTIONS: Place on the table a picture of the shepherds and the angels. Arrange with evergreens and candles as suggested for the previous session.

PRELUDE: Hymn tune, *Adeste Fidelis*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

First Child: Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward. (Psalm 40:5a)

Second Child: The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. (Psalm 126:3)

LEADER: The coming of Christmas, the season of the year when we remember especially the coming of Jesus, fills us with gladness. Let us sing a song of joyous praise, remembering that many other peoples of the world are also singing *their* songs of joyous praise.

HYMN: "Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come!"

LEADER: In our Bibles we find stories of Jesus written by his friends. As they told their story each tried to use the most beautiful words he could think of to describe that wonderful night when Jesus was born. Luke, in the book which he wrote, tells of what happened to some shepherds who were watching their flocks on that never-to-be-forgotten night.

CHORAL READING: (Luke 2:8-14)

Unison: Luke 2:8
First Boy: Luke 2:9
First Girl: Luke 2:10-12
Unison: Luke 2:13, 14

HYMN INTERPRETATION: "The First Nowell"

The story of the shepherds has inspired many artists. Today in this picture, we see one artist's idea of what happened to them as they watched their flocks. From England comes the gift of an old, old carol called: "The First Nowell" which seems to belong with this picture.

The word, "Nowell" means "news"—especially joyful news. As we look at the first stanza we find that the words are all very clear. They paint a word picture for us to see with our minds. This song was sung for hundreds of years by folk who could not read a song from a book, but who learned their songs by hearing them sung. They found a song like this easy to understand and remember. It is called a folk song or folk carol. Let us sing the first two stanzas.

HYMN: "The First Nowell" (stanzas 1 and 2)

LEADER: When Matthew wrote his story about the birth of Jesus, he told about wise men who came from afar to see the baby.

CHORAL READING: Matthew 2:1-11

Girls: Matthew 2:1
Three Boys: Matthew 2:2
First Girl: Matthew 2:3
Second Girl: Matthew 2:4, 5a
Boys: Matthew 2:5b, 6
Third Girl: Matthew 2:7, 8a
First Boy: Matthew 2:8b, c, d
Boys: Matthew 2:9
All: Matthew 2:10, 11

LEADER: As the folk of England sang "The First Nowell," they also included some stanzas about the wise men. Listen, while I read the three stanzas which tell about them. What pictures do you see in your minds as you hear the words?

HYMN: "The First Nowell" (stanzas 3, 4, 5)

PRAYER: We thank you, O God, for the story tellers of long ago who wrote their stories of Jesus' birth. We thank you for the many unknown people since that time who have sung songs about his coming. For these songs which we enjoy learning and singing, we give thanks. Amen.

QUIET MUSIC: Hymn tune, *Stille Nacht*

December 22

THEME: *Gifts from France*

WORSHIP CENTER SUGGESTIONS: Place on the worship table a copy of Lerolle's picture, "The Arrival of the Shepherds," arranging it with evergreens and candles as

suggested in the service for December 8.

PRELUDE: Hymn tune, *Adeste Fidelis*

LEADER: During this month we are thinking together about Christmas gifts which have come to us from many lands. One of the hymns which we have sung is a gift from Italy. Let us sing it now.

HYMN: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

LEADER: Last week we read verses from the book of Luke, sang songs, and looked at a picture which helped us think about what happened to the shepherds in the field on that first Christmas night. The book of Luke also tells us what the shepherds did after they had heard the angels' message.

CHORAL READING: Luke 2:15-20

Girls: Luke 2:15a
Boys: Luke 2:15b
All: Luke 2:16-18
Girls: Luke 2:19
All: Luke 2:20

LEADER:

A few moments ago we sang "O Come, All Ye Faithful." There are a number of other stanzas which are not usually printed in our hymnals. One of these tells how the shepherds must have felt as they approached the manger in Bethlehem.

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps.

How do you think the shepherds walked as they drew near the stable? What do you think they did when they saw Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus? Let us sing these words which are written here on the blackboard (or song chart).

HYMN: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (stanza above)

PICTURE INTERPRETATION: Lerolle, "The Arrival of the Shepherds"

From France comes a picture of the shepherds as they arrived at the stable door. The artist, Lerolle, painted the scene as he thought it probably looked. Notice the rough beams of the ceiling of the cave. See the dirt floor, the donkey standing by a tub of grain, and the piles of hay. The shepherds stand in the doorway, too full of awe and wonder to enter immediately. One has raised his hand in amazement, another has dropped to his knee, while a third stands on tiptoe in order to have a better view of the little family.

Mary, Joseph, and the baby are in the brightest part of the picture. Mary looks lovingly at the tiny baby nestled in her arms, while Joseph's attention is turned to the shepherds.

As we look at this picture we wish that we, too, might have gone to the stable on that first Christmas night. From France, the homeland of the artist Lerolle, comes a carol sung by people who imagined that they could really do just that— "run to the cradle" to "see how the Child is sleeping."

CAROL: "Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella"

PERIOD OF GUIDED SILENCE: (Leader)

We have thought today about the shepherds on that first Christmas night. . . . We have looked at a picture and sung songs about them. . . . For the beauty of Christmas songs and pictures, gifts from many peoples of the world, we thank you, O God!

December 29

THEME: *Gifts from All the World*

WORSHIP CENTER SUGGESTIONS: Place on

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the table a globe. Hang around it a holly wreath.

PRELUDE: "Joy to the World"

CALL TO WORSHIP:

First Child: Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, *all ye lands!* (Psalm 100:1)

Second Child: . . . the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. (Job 38:7a)

Unison: Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad. (Psalm 96:11a)

HYMN: "Joy to the World! the Lord is Come!"

LEADER:

On our worship table this morning we have a globe with a holly wreath around it. This is a reminder that Christmas belongs to all the people of the world who have heard the story of Jesus' coming and who rejoice because of it. This month we sang a Christmas hymn of praise which is a gift from Italy. Let us sing it now.

HYMN: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

LEADER:

We found new beauty in a picture which many of us had known for a long time—The Madonna of the Chair, painted by an Italian artist, Raphael.

It was interesting to discover that the Christmas tree custom is a gift from Germany, perhaps begun by Martin Luther. We sang the cradle hymn which he wrote for his own children. Let us sing it again.

HYMN: "Away in a Manger" (stanza 1)

LEADER: From Luther's homeland comes the Christmas hymn, "Silent Night," written by two good friends and first sung in an obscure little German village. Let us sing it here in our church school this morning.

HYMN: "Silent Night, Holy Night"

LEADER: Last week our service of worship took us to France, the birthplace of the artist Lerolle, who painted "The Arrival of the Shepherds." We enjoyed the gay French carol, "Bring a Torch." Let us sing it now.

CAROL: "Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella"

LEADER: These hymns, pictures, customs, and carols all celebrate the coming of Jesus as it is recorded in the Bible. Let us listen again to these stories of the shepherds and wise men as they are told by Luke and Matthew.

CHORAL READING: (See arrangements for December 15 and 22)

QUIET MUSIC: Hymn tune, *Stille Nacht*

MOMENT OF SILENCE

LEADER: People from many nations of the world have helped us to celebrate Christmas. Today we have been remembering again some of the gifts of art and music which have come to us from far away and long ago. Let us sing the last stanza of the hymn, "All the World." (See No. 128, in *Singing Worship*, by Edith Lovell Thomas)

PRAYER:

O God, we thank thee for Christmas!
We join in carols sung by folk in many lands,
And it brings the whole world nearer.
We love the songs first sung by other peoples;
We sing them as if they were our own,
For the stories we know of Jesus,
Are the stories they know;
And have brought the same feelings
Of joy and good will
To them as to us,
Making them kindlier,
More thoughtful of others;
Making them wish, like us, in their hearts,
For friendliness everywhere.
O God, we thank thee for Christmas.

JEANETTE E. PERKINS[1]

Group: "Joy to the World"—first verse

HYMN: "O Happy Home, Where Thou Art Loved"

TALK: (by the leader)

After explanation of worship center is given, state that today is called Advent Sunday, which is the beginning of our preparation for Christmas. Soon the Christmas Spirit will cast its spell on us again. It will brighten the streets. It will put lights in the windows. It will restore to us all the fantasies of our childhood. We will be enchanted by the hurry, the bustle, and the gay colorings of the holiday season.

But the Christmas season which begins today means more than a coloring of life, means more than anticipated gifts. It means a season of the year when we relive the good will and happiness which Jesus lived; for Jesus was born so that good will and peace might reign among the peoples of the earth.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah, many hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, sang of his coming in Isaiah 9:6-7 (This should be read aloud) Mary sang with joy of Jesus' coming in Luke 2:46-55, (which should also be read aloud). How can we today express our joy of Jesus' birth?

HYMN: "Joy to the World! the Lord is Come"

STORY:

BEING CHRISTMAS CHRISTIANS AT HOME

We can express our joy of Jesus' coming through our singing. During the month in our homes we can sing some of the beautiful Christmas carols and we can learn new ones. There are yet other ways of expressing our Christmas joy as this story illustrates:

Thirteen-year-old Bud sat down disgustedly at the dinner table and complained to his mother that he was hungry and how could he live until morning on scrambled eggs, tomato juice, and hot chocolate. Father, who was to give a lecture that evening on his recent trip to Europe, stopped, pushed back his chair and looked at Bud. Then in a quiet voice he replied, "Bud, any thirteen year old boy in Europe would think this dinner a feast." Father had travelled through Holland, France, Czechoslovakia, and Germany.

Bud retorted, "But Dad, you don't look starved."

"Yes, but I ate with the army and at the embassies. But when I ate with the civilians I usually had only potatoes and black bread. Eggs are very scarce and the only eggs I had in France were gotten from the courtyard where once an ambassador's wife had entertained at tea. The only tomato juice I had was when I ate with the army.

"In Czechoslovakia a doctor told me that his six-year-old son had never seen an orange. Chocolate is a luxury known only to those lucky individuals who have friends and relatives in America who send them food packages. The only places that children even know what butter tastes like are in Normandy and Denmark.

"I was in Holland the first day that they were allowed to have white bread, and what a celebration! Just like the Fourth of July here. Boys and girls walked down the street munching long bread sticks as if they were ice cream cones or candy."

Bud breathed a long sigh when his father stopped, and thoughtfully replied, "Yes, I guess I should be thankful I have a home, my parents, and food. But what can I do to show God that I deserve all this, when other boys and girls have so little?"

After Father had gone to his speaking engagement, Mother and Bud and sister Sue discussed how they could be Christmas Christians at home. Bud suggested he could

[1] In *Children's Worship In the Church School.* Harper and Brothers, Publishers. Used by permission of the publishers.

Intermediate Department

*By Frances Nall **

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Peace and Good Will*

For the Leader

Help the intermediates to realize that peace is not made around a conference table in Paris or New York, but that the lasting peace of the world is made by the attitude of each person as he lives in his home, community, and country. At this Christmas season stress that God's love as expressed in the life of Jesus is the only guide toward world peace. Challenge the junior-highs to a desire to live as Christmas Christians in their homes, at school and in the world, so that they may help build a world of peace, for Jesus came into this world as the Prince of Peace.

During this month have a worship center which expresses the traditional celebration of Jesus' birth and explain the meaning each week. On December 1, have the Bible on the altar open to the Christmas story and two lighted candles which represent Jesus, the Light of the World. On December 8, add a holly wreath which represents the everlasting love of God for his children. December 15, add the evergreen whose branches point upward to God and help us think of God's love as always with us. December 22, place on the altar gifts, wrapped in white, for starving children overseas and in America. These help us think of the Wise Men who brought gifts to the Christ Child. December 29, have picture of "The Light of the World"[1] on the altar to represent Jesus as our guide in our everyday living now and in 1947.

December 1

THEME: *Peace and Good Will Begin at Home*

PRELUDE: "God of the Strong, God of the Weak"

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader:

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:
Fear before him, all the earth.
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad.

* Staff Consultant on Church School Curriculum First Methodist Church, Evanston, Illinois.

[1] "The Light of the World" by Hunt may be ordered from your denominational book store or from the New York Sunday School Commission, Inc., 416 Lafayette St., New York City.

do without some things on his Christmas list to send food to some boy in Europe. Sue thought she should show that she deserved a good home by helping her mother with the Christmas preparations. Mother gave some other ideas. (Let two or three students give their ideas of how they can be Christmas Christians all during December in their homes.)

OFFERING: For the needy in Europe.

OFFERING RESPONSE: "O Thou Who Hearest"

BENEDICTION: As we go to our homes help us to remember at all times Jesus' love for his family. May we too have this love for our homes. In thy name, we pray. Amen.

December 8

THEME: *Peace and Good Will in the Community*

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Enter into His Gates with Thanksgiving"

OPENING SENTENCES: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

HYMN: "There's a Beautiful Star"

RESPONSIVE READING AND SINGING:

Leader: It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High.

Group: Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!'

Leader: To show forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.

Group: Joyful all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th' angelic host proclaim
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

Leader: O Lord, how great are thy works!
And thy thoughts are very deep.

Group: Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the Newborn King.'

STORY:

SANTA WEARS BLACK[2]

Bill and Peg were bursting with excitement, for Dan's grandfather was coming from Palestine and Mrs. Newfield, Dan's mother, was planning a big party.

Just as Bill and Peg were getting ready to go to the party, their little sister Jane came bursting into the house yelling, "I saw Santa Claus, and he wears black."

Thinking it was a childish fantasy, they laughed but the more they laughed, the more Jane insisted that she had met Santa Claus out on the sidewalk "He had a long white beard and a nice smile and talked in a funny language. And he gave me a big piece of candy all wrapped in shiny tinfoil," Jane explained. Mother, realizing who the Santa dressed in black was, suggested that he was probably Dan's grandfather. But Jane insisted that he had such a jolly face that he must be Santa.

Just then the telephone rang and Mrs. Newfield asked if Peg and Bill could come over soon, for at sundown they would begin the party at the lighting of the Hanukah candles.

Peg and Bill hurried out the door carrying presents for Dan. When they arrived at the Newfields Dan and his friends were busy playing games. The house was decorated for the Feast of Lights with evergreens and holly. Peg and Bill joined in the games and were having a glorious time when Mrs. Newfield came to the door and invited the boys and girls to the dining room.

It too was decorated with holly, evergreens and bells. On the table were blintzes (thin pancakes rolled, with cheese and jelly inside), fruits, nuts and candies. In the center were the tall unlighted candles. As everyone stood around the table silently, Mr. Newfield and his aged father-in-law walked into the room.

Mrs. Newfield said, "I want you to meet my father. He is sorry he cannot speak to you in English, but it will take some time for him to learn it." The little man dressed in black with the jolly face and the shiny white beard smiled as his daughter continued, "He has just come from a land far away where I was born. This is the first time in years that we have been able to celebrate Hanukah together so we are very happy. I feel as though God had brought him to us." She put her arm around her father affectionately.

"Now we are going to light the Hanukah candles, and after father has blessed them, he'll hand out the gifts." Mrs. Newfield continued, "We people of the Jewish faith do not celebrate Christmas as you do, but we worship the same God and we too have a celebration at this time of year called the Feast of Lights. We decorate our houses, give each other gifts and try to live especially close to God." Mrs. Newfield turned to her father and in a few Hebrew sentences asked him to bless the Hanukah candles.

The little man in black with the glowing face and shiny white beard raised his hand as he said, "Boruch atah . . . lehadlik nare shel Hanukah." (Blessed art thou, Oh Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who hast sanctified us by thy commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of Hanukah.")

After the impressive candle lighting ceremony, Mrs. Newfield read out the names while her father gave a present, which he had brought from Palestine, to each boy and girl. There were mother of pearl beads from Bethlehem, olive wood candle holders from Nazareth, oranges from Jaffa, figs from the hills near Jerusalem, and smooth salty stones from the Dead Sea. It was a wonderful party.

On the way home Bill, carrying their gifts carefully, said to his sister, "No wonder Jane thought Dan's grandfather was Santa Claus, for he radiates the Spirit of Christmas."

"And to think he came from the land where Jesus lived," continued Peg. "Let's invite the Newfield's over for our Christmas celebration."

(Let two or three students tell how they can create good will in their own community at Christmas time.)

[2] Adapted from story by Maeanna Cheserton-Mangle.

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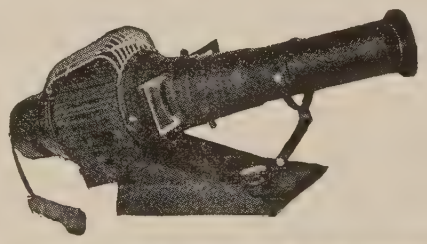

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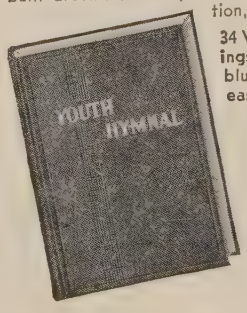

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OFFERING: For some community project.
HYMN: "All My Heart This Night Rejoices"
BENEDICTION: Psalm 119:33.

December 15

THEME: *Peace and Good Will among Nations*
PRELUDE: "The First Noel the Angel Did Say"
OPENING SENTENCES: Psalm 105:1-4
HYMN: "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"
SCRIPTURE: (by verse choir)
Light voice: Matthew 5:3-5.
Medium voice: Matthew 5:6-7.
Light voices: Matthew 5:8-9.
Dark Voices: Matthew 5:10-12.
Full choir: Isaiah 2:2-4.
PRAYER: Our Father, inspire us to live in such a manner that we may at all times be aware of thy presence. Speak to us above the noise and excitement so that we can follow thy ways. Help us to spread thy truth throughout the world. In thy name, we pray. Amen.
TALKS: "Peace and Good Will Among Nations"

We not only need to be Christmas Christians in our homes and in our community, but we need to help spread God's love which Jesus brought into this world to other nations and nationalities. How can we as intermediates help to make Jesus' birthday live around the globe? Three speakers will tell us.

First Speaker: (He should give his own ideas or tell): We can buy Indian Christmas Seals to help fight tuberculosis in famine stricken India. Thirty-five may be purchased for a dollar. Write to your Mission Board or to 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York.

Second Speaker: The Japanese Christians are asking for Bibles this Christmas. They need 100,000 Bibles and 2,500,000 copies of the New Testament. We can send our offering to the American Bible Society, Bible House Square, 57th at Park Avenue, New York 22, New York.

Third Speaker: We can send Christmas cards to boys and girls in a mission school which is supported by this church. Or we can send them to an Indian school, as: in care of the Religious Work Director, Sherman Institute, Riverside, California.

OFFERING: For a selected Christmas project.
HYMN: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"
BENEDICTION: Proverbs 3:3-4.

December 22

THEME: *"Peace Among Men of Good Will"*
PROCESSIONAL: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"
CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 100: 4-5.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG

(The scenes read by the verse choir may be pantomimed or depicted in a series of tableaux. The Christmas hymns may be sung by a trained choir or the whole group, unless otherwise indicated.)

Verse Choir:
Heavy voices: Luke 2:8-9.
Light voice: Luke 2:10-12.
Light voices: Luke 2:13-14.
Hymn: "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

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Verse Choir:
Dark voice: Luke 2:15.
Medium voices: Luke 2:16-20.

Hymn: "Silent Night, Holy Night"

Verse Choir:
Dark voices: Matthew 2:1-6.

Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Verse Choir:
Dark voice: Matthew 2:7-10.

Hymn: "We Three Kings of Orient Are" (may be dramatized, and sung by three soloists, the first singing stanzas 1-2, the second singing stanza 3, and the third the last two stanzas of the hymn.)

Verse Choir: Matthew 2:11-12.

Hymn: "Joy to the World! the Lord is Come"

PRESENTATION OF WHITE GIFTS: (These should be brought and laid on the altar.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: Dear Father, as the Wise Men of old brought gifts to the Christ-Child, may we, as we bring our gifts to thee, feel thy glorious presence. We dedicate these gifts to be used in furthering thy Kingdom of Love in the world. In thy name, we pray. Amen.

RECESSIONAL: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

December 29

THEME: *Peace in the New Year*

PROCESSIONAL: "Hark, Hark, My Soul!"

CALL TO WORSHIP: Come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord. He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.

HYMN: "All Beautiful the March of Days"

SCRIPTURE: Micah 4:1-5; Ephesians 2:14-18.

HYMN: "Another Year of Setting Suns"

TALK AND READING:

Sam burst into the house very angry at his classmate down the street. He was calling Tony names, ugly names. Tony's parents had just come from overseas and they had a different religion from Sam's family. Sam's father listened to the long list of ugly names, then he took a piece of white paper from the desk and said, "Sam, will you write down for me all the ways you are better than Tony."

Sam sat and thought and thought. Finally he handed the blank piece of paper back to his Dad.

We are ready to begin a new year. Isn't it time for us to stop and think what kind of a new year we want? The three speakers will give us their ideas of what kind of a 1947 they are going to work for as New Year's Christians.

First Speaker: (Tell of the things which he feels the group should not do as New Year's Christians, such as making fun of boys and girls who are different.)

Second Speaker: (Tell of the things which the group should do as New Year's Christians.)

Third Speaker: To be New Year's Christians we need to be very close friends with our Heavenly Father, just as Jesus was. (Let the speaker tell of the ways we can have this close fellowship with God.) Tennyson tells us one way:

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.
Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day;
For what are men better than sheep and goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?

OFFERING: For the church and its work.

OFFERING RESPONSE: "All Things Come of Thee, O Lord."

BENEDICTION: May thy Spirit be in our lives each day of the New Year. Amen.

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Senior and Young People's Departments

*By Edith Brookmiller**

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men*

December 1

THEME: *Is Peace Possible?*

Secure quiet by asking the pianist to play softly, "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart," or the leader may stand in silence on the platform indicating that the worship service is to begin.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." (Isaiah 26:3.)

HYMN: "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand"

PRAYER: Grant us, O Father, that perfect peace which Jesus had amidst storm and stress and which he promised to give us. Amid the rush and confusion and uncertainties of the world, we would have our souls calm and our spirits serene. Give us, O Lord, thine own peace that it may show in our lives. Amen.

HYMN: "Lord, Speak to Me, That I may Speak"

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 32:16-18

LITANY:

Leader:
"God of grace and God of glory,
On thy people pour thy power;
Crown thine ancient Church's story;
Bring her bud to glorious flower.
Response:
Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage,
For the facing of this hour.
Leader:
Lo! the hosts of evil round us
Scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!
Fears and doubts too long have bound us,
Free our hearts to work and praise:
Response:
Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage,
For the living of these days.
Leader:
Cure thy children's warring madness,
Bend our pride to thy control;
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
Rich in things and poor in soul.
Response:
Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage,
Lest we miss Thy Kingdom's goal.
Leader:
Set our feet on lofty places;
Gird our lives that they may be
Armored with all Christlike graces
In the fight to set men free.
Response:
Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage,
That we fail not man nor Thee!"

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK[1]

MESSAGE:

As the Christmas season approaches, we hear the familiar words, "peace on earth, good-will toward men." Yet from all parts of the world we hear, like Jeremiah of old, the cries, "peace, peace," when there is no peace. Is it anything to us, who are so comfortable here in America?

Do you remember the statement President Truman made in one of his speeches, and which was published widely by the newspapers? "If the world is long to survive, the gigantic power which man has acquired through atomic energy must be matched by spiritual strength of greater magnitude. All mankind now stands in the doorway to destruction, or upon the threshold of the greatest age in history. Only a high moral code can master this new power of the universe, and develop it for the common good."

We Christians profess to know the answer: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever." But as professing Christians, the thing we need to do at the beginning of this Christmas season is to look inward to test the quality of our lives, and to look outward and take a part in helping to make the church of today a "vital, crusading power of righteousness."

GUIDED PRAYER:

May we pray individually and silently, asking God that our lives this season may be *Purposeful*—that we may all be working toward the common goal of peace on earth through Jesus Christ.

Silence.

May we pray that our lives may be *Practical*—that we will put into practice the beliefs and the faith which we profess; that when we say love all men as brothers we shall not discriminate against those of another race.

Silence.

May we pray that our lives will be *Prayerful*, for we know that "peace on earth" cannot come through our efforts, but only through Christ working in us. Jesus spent many hours a day in prayer. How can we expect to do his will without prayer?

Silence.

And finally we pray for *Power*, that new sources of vitality and force may come to us in order that we may better serve Him.

Silence.—Amen

CLOSING HYMN: "Take then Our Minds, Dear Lord"

December 8

THEME: *Good Will*

PIANO PRELUDE: "Lord, I Want to Be a Christian"

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 100

HYMN: "I Bind My Heart This Tide"

SCRIPTURE: Acts 10: 34, 35. Ephesians 2: 13, 14, 18, 19.

HYMN: "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"

LEADER: "Prepare for Christmas"

For this month we are thinking a great deal about "peace on earth, good will toward men." Last Sunday we talked about our responsibilities as Christians if we are to have peace instead of war. Today let us search our hearts as we listen to seven heart-searching statements which should help us to prepare our hearts for the Christmas season.

First Reader: "Christmas is begin-again-day. 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only son' shames us into admitting our selfishness, our pride, and our unwillingness to be a Christian more than in name. At Christmas time God comes into our lives anew."[2]

Second Reader: "The Inn of Bethlehem was shut to the Holy Family. We shut our hearts and our minds to the simple needs of humanity. We shut our hearts to Christ but like to use his name in describing how nice and moral and upright we are. Will we make this Christmas different for Christ's sake by opening our hearts to him and then to the need of one of his children?"[2]

Third Reader: "It is people who fear not the love of God and who accept God's good will who help to make peace in the world. 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people . . . for unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour.' Do we really believe that those who accept Christ as Lord are to be peacemakers in as bold a fashion in the affairs of mankind and of nations as the communists are bold about a world at peace under the force of materialism? Or is God promising only peace of mind when we accept Christ as Lord?"[2]

Fourth Reader: "Celebrating Christ's birthday is also celebrating your own Christian birthday. There was a day when the spirit of Christ came to live inside you. He broke through the old and ornery life you were living. He began life in you in a small way and his way grew until you have become more and more like him. That was a great day for Christ and also for you."[2]

Fifth Reader: "In Amsterdam, Holland, a young woman said to my face that I was 'a bad man' because I was a Christian. Her idea of Christians was persons who really didn't mean what they believed. They didn't expect to carry out what they believed. They were people looking for a soft life here and a softer life later on in heaven. They were people who neglected the needs of justice of the masses, of the exploited, of the hated and of the workers. To her, the Christians were those who organized society against the human needs of the workers. Are Christians 'bad people' as this young communist woman said?"[2]

Sixth Reader: "Of the Christians in the Macedonian churches, Paul wrote 'first, they gave their own selves to the Lord.' There are youth fellowships looking for Christmas gifts which would be the whole-hearted commitment of the young people themselves to the cause of Christ. 'For this cause I bow my knees . . .'"[2]

LEADER: (Ask for sentence prayers by the group. If the thoughts expressed in the seven paragraphs are not echoed in the prayers, then close the service with a prayer of your own, emphasizing the need for whole-hearted commitment to the cause of Christ.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

December 15

THEME: *Jesus Christ Is Lord*

PIANO PRELUDE: Medley of Christmas hymns

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Something beautiful happens to the heart—to your heart and to my heart—when the birthday of our Lord draws near. Something starts singing in the soul. It might be called a reflection of starlight, this emotion that we feel. It might be called a promise of peace; it might be called simply love, and good will toward men." (Margaret Sangster)

CHRISTMAS HYMNS BY GROUPS: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" and "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

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* Assistant to Secretary for Women's Work, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

[1] Used by permission of author.

[2] Written by Kenneth Reeves, Director of Young People's Work, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Philadelphia, Pa.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7

SOLO OR QUARTET: A Christmas carol from another land.

Choose from any of your carol books, a carol from another land, such as, "In a Manger He Is Lying" (Polish); "Asking for Lodging" (Mexican); "Kolyada" (Russian).[2]

HYMN: "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"

MEDITATION: "Watchman, Tell Us"

"Watchman, tell us of the night, what its signs of promise are." Radio commentators, newspapermen, our friends, and sometimes even ourselves are saying the same thing today. What of the future? Can we ever have peace? Wherein lies the hope for a peaceful world? It seems that all humanity is crying, "Watchman, tell us of the night, what its signs of promise are."

And at this Christmas season, the answer rings clear, "Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height, see that glory-beaming star." Again the voice of suffering humanity cries: "Watchman, doth its beauteous ray, aught of hope and joy foretell?" Again down through the ages comes the reassuring reply: "Traveler, yes it brings the day . . ."

In every country of the world there are Christians who will receive renewed faith and increased strength as they make preparation for the celebration of Christmas. In many places during the past few years, followers of Christ were suppressed and persecuted, and Christmas could be kept only in their hearts. But all across Europe, and China, and yes, Japan, Christian young people are gathering together to make plans for the celebration of the birthday of our Saviour. This past summer the young people in Europe were influential in the choosing of the theme for the world youth conference at Oslo, Norway next summer: "Jesus Christ is Lord." No longer must they give supreme allegiance to Hitler, or Mussolini, or any political leader, but they are free to give allegiance to Him who *is* Lord.

"Watchman, tell us of the night, what its signs of promise are." The answer lies in the hearts of each one of us. Are we willing to believe, to say, and above all, to act upon the statement, "Jesus Christ is Lord"? If so, then let Christians everywhere unite in forces for justice, mercy, and brotherhood of all men in Jesus Christ, children of one God, the Father.

PRAYER: Into thy presence we come, our Father God, grateful that through him doubt and terror are withdrawn, and as individuals and as a world family, we have the true foundations for peace and understanding. Help each one of us so to live that everything we do will be in accordance with thy will for our lives.

CLOSING HYMN: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

December 22

THEME: *The Christmas Story*

Following is a very simple worship service which retells the Christmas story through music, scripture, and living pictures. (For a service built around the idea of the spirit of Christmas in today's world, see *Society Kit*, Volume IV, Westminster Press, $2.50).

For the living pictures, you may build, quite easily, a large picture frame, approximately 6.5′ wide, 7′ high, and 7′ deep. Draperies, or monks cloth, or outing flannel should be used for the walls of the interior of the frame. If theatrical gauze can be obtained to cover the opening, your pictures will have the effect of an oil painting. Flood lights, or large electric bulbs in the front corners of the frame, will provide the lighting needed.

Characters needed:
The Shepherd Scene: Three boys
The Angel Scene: Three girls
The Manger Scene: One girl (Mary), *or* One girl and boy (Mary and Joseph)
Two girls, representing angels, are needed to pull back the curtains over the picture frame.

PIANO AND VIOLIN PRELUDE: "Christmas Carols" (Diggle)

OPENING PRAYER:

Holy Father, we thank you for sending to us your Son in order that we might know what you are like. We thank you for his very humble birth because in it we realize that all peoples may find you—that we do not have to be sons of kings, or noblemen, or to have power or wealth to find the true meaning of life. As we listen again to the familiar story of the birth of Christ, we ask that you will help us to realize that the Christian spirit is the Christmas spirit extended throughout the whole year, and that just as you sent Christ to reveal yourself, so must we reveal the true meaning of the word Christian. Others are looking for the spirit of Christ in us, because we carry his name. Help each one of us to be the Christmas message. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

CAROLS by the Group: "Joy to the World," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

THE STORY OF SILENT NIGHT:

(Tell briefly the story of how this hymn came to be written. See *Lyric Religion*, H. Augustine Smith, pp. 363-365, Fleming H. Revell Co.)

HYMN BY GROUP: "Silent Night"

THE CHRISTMAS STORY: Luke 2:1-16; Matthew 2:1-11

(At conclusion of the Scripture, the pianist should play softly the first stanza of the hymn, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," while the two angels pull back the curtains, revealing the first living picture.)

THE SHEPHERD SCENE, a living picture.

First Soloist: "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," first and sixth stanzas. (The soloist should stand at the back of the room so that all attention will be centered on the living picture. Angels pull curtains together when soloist has finished.)

VIOLIN SOLO: "Joy to the World"

THE ANGEL SCENE, a living picture.

(Again the pianist plays softly while the

[2] *Fifty Christmas Carols of All Nations*, by Eduardo Marzo, published by the Willis Music Co., Cincinnati, is a good source for such carols.

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angels pull back the curtains revealing the three angels.) *First Soloist:* "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

"O Holy Night," to be sung by *second soloist.*

The Manger Scene, a living picture.

Violin Solo: "O Little Town of Bethlehem." (Angels pull curtains together when violinist begins second stanza. As music fades away, the Leader's voice is heard.)

Leader:

"For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given,
And the government shall be upon his shoulders,
And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Prayer and Benediction

December 29

Theme: *There Is a Way*

Piano Prelude: "We Would be Building," *or* "Rise Up, O Men of God."

Call to Worship: Repeat together the Apostles' Creed.

Hymn: "God of our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand"

Scripture: Joshua 24:14-16

Responsive Reading: Read responsively the Ten Commandments, found in the front pages of most hymn books, or read from Exodus 20.

First Speaker: "The Better Way"

A newspaper article this last fall told the story of a young man, 27 years of age, who was executed for the murder of a state police officer. Shortly before his death, he wrote an autobiographical article for the state prison magazine, in which he said that the only happy days he had ever spent were a few weeks with his uncle on a farm. He said his uncle took him swimming and hunting, and gave him a gun and a horse. "It was the most enjoyable time of my life," the young man wrote. "I never stole anything the whole time I was there. I never even had the urge to steal." And then the young man went on to say, "I don't know what to do with a kid who is a little wild. Putting me in the gas chamber isn't going to stop other crazy kids from doing the things I have done. There ought to be a better way to teach kids that they should obey the law and live right."

Second Speaker:

There *is* a better way "to teach kids that they should obey the law and live right." And the answer is four-fold: First, a study of the Bible, discovering therein the eternal truths, one of which was read this morning—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Second, constant communication with God in prayer, which is the source of power for our lives. Third, a complete dedication of our lives to Christ to the extent that we can say, "I will dedicate my life to Christ, and I will seek to discover God's will for my life and do it." And finally, to live by the faith we profess. In other words, our everyday living must be measured by his, if we are to be true representatives of him whose name we bear.

First Speaker:

But this boy that I told you about a few minutes ago probably never saw the inside of a church. How could he have known that there is a better way?

Second Speaker:

That's where this fourth point comes in—that those of us who call ourselves Christian have a responsibility toward such boys and girls. (Insert here an example of the need for Christian influence in your own community. If you are not aware of such a need, consult with your local Chief of Police. Then suggest a way in which your group may be of practical help. One church group kept in constant touch with the superintendent of the home for juvenile delinquents, and many times during the year the girls from this home were allowed to spend the week-end in the homes of church members. The girls received, for the first time, an impression of what a real home was like.)

Prayer by the Leader

Closing Hymn: "Christian, Rise and Act Thy Creed," *or* "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"

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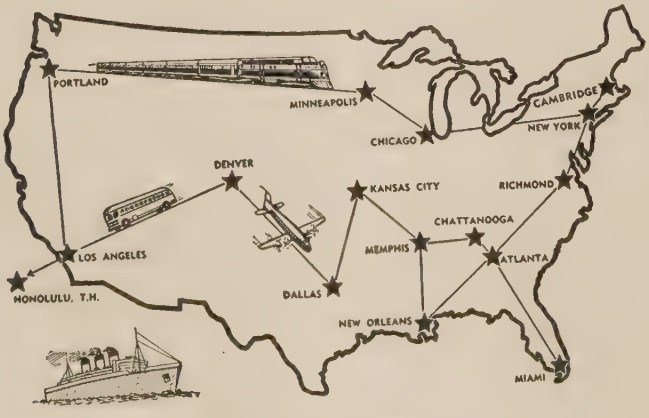

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We Thank Thee, Lord

(Continued from page 15)

The Choir sings the first and second stanzas of "O Lord of Heaven and Earth." A girl with the tray of fruit comes down the aisle, which the Girl at the Altar places at right front.

MINISTER:
For all the crops which bountiful nature brings;
For yields of fertile fields and garden plots;
For all the food to nourish life,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."[9]

The Choir sings the first stanza of "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come." Several girls come down the aisle. One has a tray of vegetables. Others have ears of corn, pumpkins or other vegetables. The Girl at the Altar places the tray at the left front of the altar, and the other things behind it and the tray of fruit.

MINISTER:
For all the beauties of thy world,
We thank thee, thank thee, Lord.
For buds which open when spring is new,
And bring the message of returning life;
For flowers that gladden summer hours
And share their fragrant charm;
For blossoms which come when days grow short,
And bring their cheer at autumn time;
For all the flowers of the earth,
Blossoms which speak of thee,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord."[10]

The Choir sings the first stanza of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," while tiny children bring flowers to the altar. The Girl at the Altar places them at front center of the altar.

MINISTER:
For peace which comes on earth,
We thank thee, Lord,
And we would also pray
That it might grow until
In the hearts of men
Thy kingdom shall come,
Thy will be done.
For peace on earth,
We thank thee, Lord.

READER: "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."[11]

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."[12]

Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."[13]

The Choir sings the first stanza of "Come, Peace of God," while a girl with olive branches comes down the aisle. The Girl at the Altar places them at the foot of the altar cross.

MINISTER:
For the truth, which thou hast given
Through thy Son who came to earth,
Who took on human form and lowly birth;
For his life, his message glorious,
For his death upon the cross,
For the hope he gives of heaven,—
We thank thee,
Thank thee, Lord.

READER: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."[14]

"Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."[15]

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."[16] "King of kings and Lord of lords."[17]

The Choir sings the sixth stanza of "For the Beauty of the Earth" (beginning "For thyself, best Gift Divine"). A girl with Bible comes down the aisle. The Girl at the Altar places it on the altar in front of the cross. The Girl at the Altar exits.

Then, the Minister and the congregation join in a Litany of Thanksgiving. After this they sing, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" and the Benediction follows.

[1] Psalm 106:1 [2] Psalm 33:12 [3] Proverbs 14:34
[4] Psalm 122:1 [5] Psalm 84:1,2 [6] Psalm 24:1,2
[7] Psalm 67:5-7 [8] Psalm 107:21-22 [9] Psalm 107:1,2
[10] Psalm 105:1-3 [11] Luke 2:14 [12] Matthew 5:9
[13] John 15:27 [14] John 3:16 [15] Psalm 145:13
[16] Revelation 11:15 [17] Revelation 19:20

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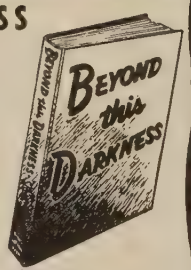

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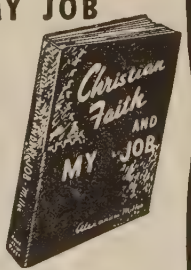

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With the New Books

So You Want to Be a Camp Counselor

By Elmer Ott. New York 17, Association Press, 1946. 112 p. $.75.

Fifty Cases for Camp Counselors

By Roland W. Ure. New York 17, Association Press, 1946. 96 p. $.75.

With the tremendous growth of the camping movement any new materials in camp administration and program are eagerly received by camp leaders. Church groups which have for years emphasized the summer conference program, have recently moved into the camp field, especially camps for intermediates and juniors.

These two publications, written by men active in the YMCA camping program, offer excellent guidance to camp counselors. Since good personal relationships between counselor and camper are at the heart of a successful camping program, the help offered by Mr. Ure and Mr. Ott make a genuine contribution to the advancement of good camping techniques.

Fifty Cases for Camp Counselors is a revised edition of a book which, according to Harrie Booms of the American Camping Association, "can take much of the credit for the progress made in the last decade in educational camping." The book covers a broad scope, cases including the story of a homesick boy, dealing with temper tantrums, dealing with personality conflict in a cabin group, the creative use of mealtime, and forty-six others. The Foreword entitled "A Counselor's Tool Kit" and written by Charles E. Hendy, a recognized authority in group work, is in itself a brief digest of the equipment of a good counselor. Each case study is followed by a set of questions for discussion and a list of references, making the book useful in counselor discussion groups.

So You Want to be a Camp Counselor is an excellent brief textbook for a camp director to put into the hands of his counselors. Although many of the illustrations are taken from YMCA camps, most of them are quite applicable to church camping. Such chapters as "Signposts of a Good Camp," "The Counselor as a Group Leader" and "Program Building" will be especially helpful. The appendix contains samples of good camp record keeping, the type of letters which should be written by counselors to parents, a sample counselor application blank, and a bibliography on camping. The emphasis upon indigenous programs and democratic procedures is particularly good.

H. S.

The Christian Heritage in America

By George Hedley. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1946. 177 p. $2.00.

There are not many books to put into the hands of lay people who want to know how the various Christian denominations arose. There is no lack of good books on the history of the Christian church. There are, furthermore, many competent treatments of American church history and of its specialized phases. But there are not many brief discussions of our American denominations which are readable and accurate as well. Professor Hedley has succeeded admirably in distilling the essences of our various denominational traditions, and presenting them in an attractive manner.

Here are the varieties of our Christian faith presented without apology and with an emphasis upon the positive contributions of each church. "We belong to one division or to another as we may have been recruited, or as we may have chosen to enlist. A few of us may decide to seek reassignment to another division, because we think we belong more naturally to it and therefore shall serve more effectively in its ranks. That is a secondary matter. The important thing is that we are all in the same army."

Adult groups and youth fellowships interested in discovering what is behind the several church congregations in any American town would find this a helpful guide for study and discussion.

G. E. K.

The Rebirth of the German Church

By Stewart W. Herman. New York 16, Harper and Brothers, 1946. 297 p. $2.50.

The former pastor of the American Church in Berlin, whose pastorate terminated with the entrance of the United States into World War II, is now Assistant Secretary of the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid of the World Council of Churches. The first position gave him the background for his excellent earlier book, "It's Your Souls We Want," which set forth vividly the impact of Hitler's national socialism upon the Christian Church in Germany. His present position, enabling him to travel widely throughout Germany, makes him one of the most competent Americans to write of the present situation in the Christian Church of post war Germany. His book is readable, informative, and fully trustworthy.

Mr. Herman makes clear the problems involved in the "de-nazification" of church leadership and the pressing for "repentance" as preached by Niemoller and others. A considerable portion of the book sets forth the desperate material needs, the plight of the millions of displaced persons, and the staggering toll of disease and death. As he says, no matter what may have been the crimes of the Hitler State, Christians cannot look with equanimity upon this ghastly suffering. The book does not make pleasant reading, but anyone who wishes to be informed on the true situation in tragic Germany had better resolutely go through its pages.

P. G. M.

Power for Peace

By O. Frederick Nolde. Philadelphia, Muhlenburg Press, 1946. $1.00.

The church has been all too slow in preparing sound study materials based upon the urgent problems arising in the new attempt to establish a workable international organization. This book, prepared by one of our most competent churchmen in this field, helps to meet this need.

It begins with the church's responsibility for an ordered world, and gives some simple but important musts for the church if it is to carry its responsibility in this field. There is included an excellent review of the church's efforts to promote world order and to establish the kind of relationship between nations that will make peace possible.

There follows a series of chapters describing clearly but in some detail the United Nations Organization, and its various related bodies. The problems and weaknesses are handled realistically. Such a detailed analysis of the UN is greatly needed by church groups if they are to be intelligent in working for peace. Christian people must be informed and be practical as well as idealistic if peace is to be established.

Power for Peace is usable as a study guide by both adult and young peoples groups, and should be used widely. It was written partially in response to a request of the Committee on the Religious Education of Youth, for a sound study guide on the United Nations Organization. Dr. Nolde has rendered the churches an excellent service.

I. K. B.

Ministerial Counselling and Planned Parenthood

By Roy A. Burkhart. New York 22, National Clergymen's Advisory Council, 1945. 36 p.

This valuable small volume of thirty-six pages presents a comprehensive teaching aid to be used in courses for training ministers and church leaders in seminaries, summer conferences and special training enterprises. It should also be especially valuable to pastors and religious education directors as they face both the problem of personal counselling and establishing a church program of marriage education. It deals basically with the spiritual factors of marriage as related to the welfare of the home, the parents, the church, and society. Of considerable value is the "Blueprint for a Church Program of Marriage Education." There are provocative questions for discussion and also resource references. It is a frank book and also deeply spiritual.

J. A. W.

Planning Church Buildings

Edited by E. M. Conover. New York 10, The Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture, 1945. 62 p. $2.00.

"Planning Church Buildings" is mainly a collection of architects' floor plan sketches, photographs and pen and ink sketches of interiors of buildings erected in many different parts of the country. Accompanying each plan are brief helpful comments. A few pages are given to general plans which a church should make before entering an actual building enterprise. The book would be useful to a committee in thinking about its needs and seeing how similar needs were met in other communities. Several illustrations of "Building on the Unit Plan" are given.

J. A. W.

Such as I Have, The Stewardship of Talent

By Carl F. H. Henry. Nashville, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 60 p., 25c.

Here are sixty pages packed full of illustrations from the lives of talent-using laymen and laywomen, pointing out to all the joys of stewardship. Dr. Henry, the author, out of his wide experience, has given pastors and stewardship committees an outstanding booklet to put in the hands of laymen who wish to know how one begins, grows and blossoms into a Christlike steward.

P. C. L.

Junior Sermons for Special Occasions

By Jacob J. Sessler. New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1946. 96 p. $1.25.

A small, stimulating volume for a pastor or teacher who needs to find a simple thought within the experience of a junior age boy or girl. "Simple" is to be distinguished from "childish." The author ably and naturally uses the ordinary objects familiar to the average household or to the average child to illustrate these simple truths. While the book somewhat roughly follows the church year it has talks usable for Sundays often difficult to find material for. There are talks for "Reformation Sunday," "Father's Day," "Good Friday," "Labor Day," "Loyalty Sunday," "Bible Sunday" etc., as well as the usual special days such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. There are also a few nature talks.

J. A. W.

Additional Books Received

*Christian Faith and My Job. By Alexander Miller. New York 17, Haddam House, 1946. $1.00.

The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament. By Norman H. Snaith. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1946. 251 p., $2.75. This book deals with those elements of Old Testament religion which make it different from any other religion. And these ideas are centered in ideas as to the nature of God.

* Eyes of Faith. By Paul Sevier Minear. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1946. 307 p., $3.00.

Forgotten Women — In Convents. By Helen Conroy (Sister Mary Ethel) New York 19, Agora Publishing Company, 1946. 120 p., $1.25.

For This We Fought. By Stuart Chase. New York, The Twentieth Century Fund, 1946. 123 p. $1.00. The sixth and last in a series of studies by Mr. Chase on postwar questions for the Twentieth Century Fund. This one deals with the kind of postwar world we must have, with proposals for getting it.

Favorite Bible Verses. The Best from Each of the Bible's Sixty-Six Books. Compiled by Henry H. Halley, Chicago. Henry H. Halley, 1946. 144 p., $.30.

* The Genius of the Prophets. By W. Arthur Faus. New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 190 p., $1.75.

*Great Christian Books. By Hugh Martin. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1946. 118 p., $1.50.

* Guiding Intermediates in Worship. By

(Continued on page 37)

*To be reviewed.

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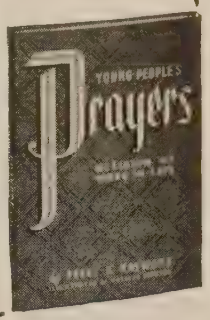

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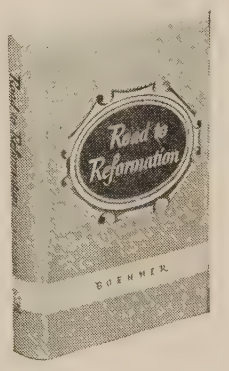

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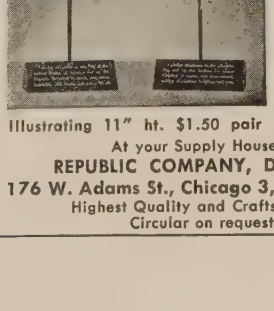

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What's Happening

Roy G. Ross

Youth in Germany

(Last month the JOURNAL *printed an extract from Dr. Ross' report following his recent trip to Europe. The following paragraphs regarding the situation facing young people in Germany are taken from the same report.)*

I WAS PLEASED to be able to spend a few days in Germany. Thanks to the courtesy of the American Army, which provided me with transportation, I was able to see and talk with a number of outstanding German leaders, including bishops and leaders in Sunday school and youth work.

Needless to say, the situation in Germany is a confused and bewildering one. The destruction of property is beyond my powers of description. The health problems are tremendous. The stories of the dispossessed, the homeless, the starving (more especially in the Russian zone) are heartbreaking.

I will not attempt to comment on the general church situation. Competent observers who have spent extended periods of time in Germany can do that much better than I. I have, however, checked and verified the following facts with respect to the youth situation:

1. Because of zonal arrangements and differing types and philosophies of civil administration, the problems in the several sectors vary greatly.

2. Germany is without religious leadership in point of numbers. Theological students and young students were forced to serve in the army. Many were killed and others are in concentration camps. Seventy-five per cent of all ministers in Berlin and the Brandenburg area were killed or are imprisoned. Most of the remaining twenty-five per cent are old men.

3. Few people in Germany understand the genius of youth work as our Christian forces conceive it. The young men of Germany have never known any patterns of program except the State control fascist type.

4. Youth attitudes are difficult. The young people are disillusioned. Many are now silent and reluctant to join anything. They remember that they were once misled. They have been trained for years to believe that the church existed to repress them and cut them off from their true destiny.

5. On the other hand, there are some rather amazing responses in some sections of Germany, particularly the western part. Where youth do turn to the church, they are very much in earnest.

6. The Sunday school movement has been tremendously handicapped for years. The children have had no Bibles and the Nazis forbade the printing of periodical literature. Now printing is permitted but paper is not available.

7. In the Russian zone the communists are making Christian group work difficult, if not impossible. At the same time, they are developing patterns of action in youth work which German leaders believe will be aggressively promoted throughout Germany if and when the occupation armies are withdrawn.

8. The idea of international fellowship among Christian youth is an entirely new experience to German young people. However, they are thrilled over the possibility.

9. German leaders are eager to have the inspiration and help which would result from visitations of Christian youth and youth leaders from America. It is my hope that a sizeable delegation may do visitation work in Germany following the Oslo World Youth Conference during the summer of 1947.

10. It would be a great blessing to the churches to have any periodical literature, particularly Sunday school quarterlies and Young People's Society program books, either recent or old, which can be spared by American publishing houses.

I came away from Germany convinced that here is a mission field which we in America dare not neglect. It is here that Christianity and communism will each test the strength of the other. As goes Germany, so will go Europe.

Southern Young People Win Parshad Scholarship Awards

CHICAGO, Ill. CHARLENE SCHICK, member of First Christian Church, Duncan, Oklahoma, and RHODES THOMPSON, Jr., son of the Rev. and Mrs. Rhodes Thompson of the Disciples of Christ Church in Paris, Kentucky, were selected the boy and the girl for top awards in the second annual Parshad Scholarship contest. This contest was held as part of the 1946 Youth Week sponsored by the United Christian Youth Movement. Presentation was made by ALFRED H. AVERY, prominent Methodist industrialist of Malden, Massachusetts and donor of the awards, at a dinner given in their honor in Chicago on September 17.

Selected from sixty-six finalists in the national contest, representing 13 denominations and coming from 41 states and one Canadian province, the top winners receive four-year college scholarships, valued at $1,600.00 each, and a summer scholarship at one of the regional conferences of the United Christian Youth Movement. The winners are both starting college this fall, Charlene Schick at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College and Rhodes Thompson, Jr. at Texas Christian University.

These young people have been very active in both denominational and interdenominational religious activities as is indicated by the fact that the award is based on Christian service and understanding of Christian responsibility and a 1,500 word essay on "The Meaning of the Christian Faith in My Community." Contests were held in church and inter-church groups in local communities throughout the country, and winners were entered in state contests. State winners were then entered in the national finals.

Other scholarships given

Six four-year college scholarships, valued at $1,000. each were also given by Mr. Avery. They were awarded to the following young people, according to geographical region: *Southwestern*, BILL HOWLAND, Enid, Oklahoma, Central Christian Church; *Eastern*, AUDREY SHERBERG, Fairhaven, Massachusetts, New Bedford Pilgrim Congregational Church; *Central*, JAMES IVAN SPAINHOWER, Maryville, Missouri, Disciples of Christ Church; *Rocky Mountain*, MARIANNA STINNETTE, Denver, Colorado, Church of the Brethren; *Southern*, HARRY MILLER GARDNER, Bridgewater, Virginia, Church of the Brethren; and *Pacific*, ADELE ELAINE RINGSTROM, Seattle, Washington, Christian Church. Sixteen awards covering full or half scholarships to UCYM Regional Conferences to be held next summer were awarded to young people in these same regions.

Denominational News

SYRACUSE, N. Y. Bishop W. Earl Ledden of the Methodist Church has recently appointed REV. A. MERRITT DIETTERICH as Executive Secretary for Christian Education of the Genesee Conference and REV. S. FOSTER WALKER as Executive Secretary for Christian Education for the Northern New York Conference.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. A gain of 35,897 members in Sunday school enrollment in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. was recorded during the past year, according to statistics just released by DR. WALTER D. HOWELL, director of the Department of Church School Administration of the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education. The total Sunday school enrollment for the year ending March 31, 1946, was 1,263,712.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. DR. A. M. TOWNSEND, Secretary of the Sunday School Publishing Board of the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc. announces the addition of the REV. V. A. EDWARDS to the staff of the Department of Christian Education. Mr. Edwards will be Director of the Rural Church Division. He comes from Fort Valley State College, Georgia, where he has been director of Religion and Rural Life.

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Councils in Action

CINCINNATI, Ohio. On September 23, 1946, the Council of Churches of Greater Cincinnati gave a testimonial dinner to Dr. Henry Pearce Atkins, with 250 present. The dinner marked the retirement of Dr. Atkins from 27 years of active service as executive secretary of the Council. A leather-bound volume containing testimonial letters was given to him. He assumed his post when the Cincinnati Council was only five years old. In the beginning, the organization was called the Federation of Churches. Since 1938, when it merged with the Hamilton County Council of Religious Education, it has been known as the Council of Churches of Greater Cincinnati.

Under his wise leadership, the Council has increased its influence on the life of the city. It was said of Dr. Atkins, "He is thoroughly evangelical in his faith, a scholar, a man of broad sympathies, a rare Christian gentleman eminently fitted for the ministry of reconciliation."

Dr. Kemper G. McComb, former executive secretary of the Church Federation of Dayton and Montgomery County, succeeded Dr. Atkins September first.

DURHAM, N. C. The North Carolina Council of Churches recently announced the appointment of Miss Frances Query as first full time consultant on Week Day Religious Education. Miss Query, a native of Charlotte, received her A. B. degree from Queens College. Her Masters degree in Religious Education was received from Presbyterian Assembly's Training School at Richmond, Virginia. For four years, Miss Query was teacher of Bible in the Durham Senior High School. For two years, she was president of the Bible Department of the North Carolina Education Association. Recently she has done graduate work at Yale Divinity School. During the past summer, she served as guest teacher at the Presbyterian Assembly's Training School where she taught Methods of Teaching the Bible in Public Schools and Visual Aids in Religious Education.

BUFFALO, N. Y. Dr. Fred H. Wilkins, professor of Religious Education, Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and the one-time secretary of the Erie County Sunday School Assn., conducted the observance of Religious Education Week for the Council of Churches of Buffalo and Erie County. During October, the Council carried on a three-day religious quest under the leadership of Dr. Georgia Harkness of Garrett Biblical Institute. This included an inter-church youth council convocation, a women's rally and a county-wide meeting.

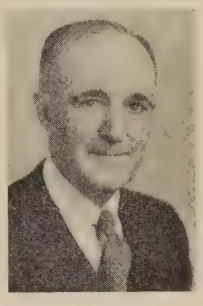
ST. PAUL, Minn. Rev. Alton M. Motter assumed the duties of Executive Secretary of the St. Paul Council of Churches September first. He had been pastor of the church of the Redeemer (United Lutheran Church in America) at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for the past thirteen years. He has been active in educational and inter-church programs and an outstanding leader in his own denomination.

On August first Miss Margaret Tappan, Ph. D. became Director of Christian Education for the Council. Dr. Tappan comes from California, where she organized the Department of Christian Education and taught in the San Francisco Theological Seminary at San Anselmo for nine years. She succeeded Mrs. H. W. Mahle.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. The Northern California-Western Nevada Council of Churches, through its Director of Weekday Schools, Miss Ellen Smith, reports that for the last school year there were 23,000 children enrolled in Protestant weekday schools in Northern California. More than one-third of these pupils received no other religious instruction. Rev. Hamlin Tobey, Field Director of the Northern California Presbytery, was elected president of the Weekday Association and Dr. Neal K. McGowan, of the west side Christian Church of San Francisco, was elected vice-president.

Miss Nellie Wagar, formerly teacher at the Baptist Missionary Training School in Chicago, began her work September first at Berkeley, serving as promoter of inter-faith work, and as executive secretary for the Berkeley-Albany Protestant Weekday Association.

C. Melville Wright Dies



C. M. Wright

DR. C. MELVILLE WRIGHT of East Orange, New Jersey, Executive Secretary of the Essex County Council of Churches, died September 28 after an illness of three weeks.

"Mell" Wright was born in Ontario. He graduated from Knox College and entered the Presbyterian ministry. He spent five years as a pioneer missionary in British Columbia, three years on the Boys' Work Staff of the National Council of the Y.M.C.A. in Canada, and ten years as director of religious education in the Bloor St. Presbyterian Church in Toronto. He then took up similar work in the Munn Ave. Presbyterian Church, East Orange, New Jersey, where he served some years.

In 1936 Mr. Wright began to invest major time to getting the laymen of New Jersey interested in "reaching the unreached," particularly through vacation church schools and other summer projects. In 1937 there were 23 centers for these projects in the state, with 1822 children enrolled, and in 1940, 67 centers with 5,528 children. These projects were a significant development in the history of the vacation church school movement. He did this work through the Christian Laymen's Commission which he directed for some years until it was merged with the New Jersey Council of Religious Education. He then joined the staff of that Council and gave half time to the Commission. During this period he also served for a time as Associate Director of the Laymen's Crusade for Christian Education of the International Council and interpreted the Crusade to lay groups in many parts of the country.

Dr. Wright threw himself with enthusiasm into any task at hand and devoted himself without reserve to many phases of Christian education. He is survived by his widow and a son and a daughter.

American Education Week

WASHINGTON, D. C. The 26th annual observance of American Education Week will be held the week beginning November 10. Materials for the celebration, including radio scripts and recordings, a movie trailer, newspaper display mats, plays, and brochures on various topics may be obtained from the National Education Association of the U. S., 1201 Sixteenth St. N. W., Washington, D.C. On Sunday, November 10 the theme is "Practicing Brotherhood" and there is available a Sunday folder for churches.

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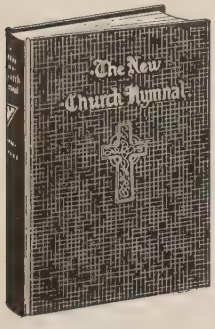

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About the Junior Department

(Continued from page 6)

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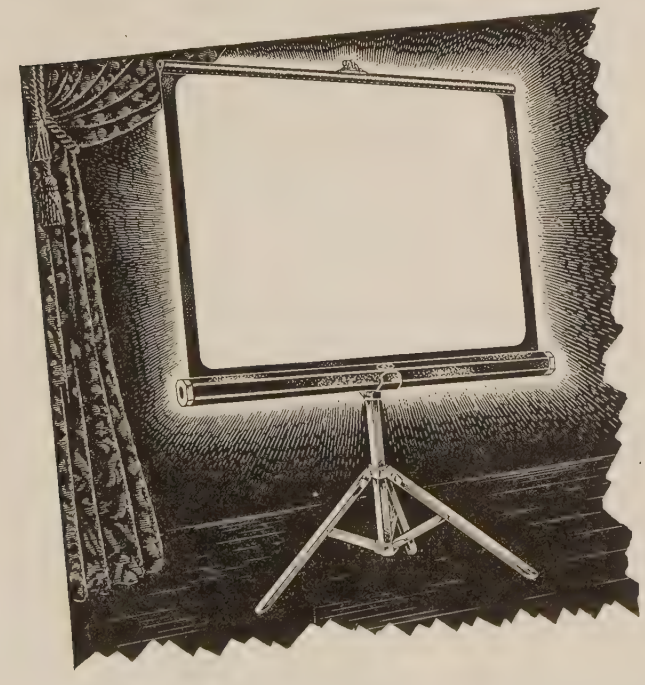
In many churches only about thirty minutes is given for the junior class. More time may be obtained by encouraging class work to begin as the first junior arrives. In place of having an opening assembly, the last fifteen minutes of the Sunday school may be used for a closing worship period for the whole department. In this way the amount of time with the juniors will be increased about thirty minutes for many of the juniors, since some of them arrive twenty or thirty minutes ahead of time.

A vacation school held during the summer, an organized junior choir, and weekday religious education in public school also will provide additional time for Christian education of juniors.

Plans for improving work with juniors

One way of improving work with juniors is by cooperative planning. Invite one or two parents to meet with the junior leaders as they plan for a new unit, rotating representatives. These parents will not only help the leaders to decide on what work should be done in the home, but they may become a committee that will be responsible for informing other parents of work to be done and of goals to be achieved. Each teacher and parent representative should receive the new quarterlies (pupils' and teacher's) at least two weeks before the unit begins. Supplementary teaching material suggested in the quarterlies should be ordered well in advance.



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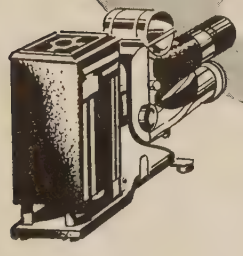

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Additional Books Received

(Continued from page 31)

Estelle Blanton Barber. New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 176 p., $1.75.

How Heredity Builds our Lives. By Robert Cook and Barbara S. Burks. Washington 5, American Genetic Association, 1946. 64 p., $.75.

The Making of a Preacher. By W. M. MacGregor. Philadelphia 7, The Westminster Press, 1946. 96 p., $1.00. This book does not deal with the making or delivery of sermons but only with the making of the preacher. It discusses Jesus as an ideal and treats a knowledge of God and of men and the enrichment of reading as factors in making a preacher. It closes with a description of the preaching which should result.

* The Message of Stewardship. By Ralph Spaulding Cushing. New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 256 p., $1.00.

* The New Testament. By Gerrit Verkuyl. Berkeley 4, California, James J. Gillick and Company, 2057 Center Street, 1945. 672 p., $3.00.

* Pathways Through the Bible. By Mortimer J. Cohen. Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946. 548 p., $3.00.

* Pointed Story Sermons for Young Folks. By P. G. S. Hopwood. New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1946. 127 p., $1.50.

Practical Idealism. By Paul Mallon. Boston, Bruce Humphries, Inc., 1946. 158 p., $2.00.

* Rural Life and the Church. By David Edgar Lindstrom. Champaign, Illinois, The Gerrard Press, 1946. 205 p., $2.50.

Readings in the Gospel of John. By Charles M. Laymon. Nashville 3, The Upper Room, Medical Arts Building, 1946. 31 p., $.10. Quantity prices.

The Resurrection of Christ. By A. Michael Ramsey. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1946. 124. p. $1.00. An able exposition by a well-known English scholar of the essentially conservative position as to the Resurrection of Christ and its significance for the church and for Christians.

Russia—Menace or Promise? Headline Series No. 58. By Vera Micheles Dean. New York, The Foreign Policy Association, Inc., 1946. 96 p., $.25.

* The Source of Human Good. By Henry N. Wieman. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1946. 312 p., $3.50.

Toward Mental Health. Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 120. By George Thorman. New York, Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1946. 32 p. $.10.

Towards Christian Democracy. By Sir Stafford Cripps. New York, Philosophical Library, 1946. 101 p. $2.00.

* Twentieth Century Education. Edited by P. F. Valentine. New York, Philosophical Library, 1946. 655 p. $7.50.

The United Nations. By Louis Dolivet. New York, Farrar, Straus and Company, 1946. 152 p. $1.75. This book tells about as much concerning the United Nations as the average person needs to know and should know.

* Whereon to Stand. By John Gilland Brunini. New York, Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1946. 302 p. $3.00.

* To be reviewed.

Angels of the Light

(Continued from page 17)

Mary should wear the traditional colors of a dark red or rose undergarment, with a blue cloak and headdress. A thin white headdress peeping out under the blue one, adds to the softness of the picture.

Joseph wears a brown undergarment, a striped cloak or aba, plus a dark headdress. He may have a staff of rough wood.

The two little cherubs have straight white rayon robes, and need no halos.

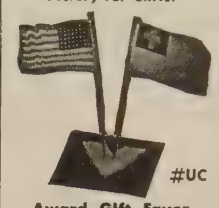
The members of the Angel Choir have similar straight robes (kimono sleeves and drawstring neckline) of white or gold-colored cheesecloth. Of course, long slips are essential under the cheesecloth. Each wears a white or gold ribbon around her head to match her costume.

The shepherd lads (five make a good number) wear tunics, girdles, cloaks, and headdresses in appropriate colors. The younger boys may wear knee-length tunics and a sheepskin.

The Wise Men should be dressed as elaborately as possible, in contrast to the shepherds.

Action: The three Nativity Angels should be chosen for beauty of voice and gracefulness of movement, since they carry the major portion of the play. The Blue Angel should have the lower voice. Each should speak slowly, with dignity, and interpret by voice the meaning of the lines. Interest and excitement should show in their speech as they describe the Bethlehem scene. If all three focus their eyes on one spot at the rear, and by slightly moving their heads and bodies apparently follow the movements of the Holy Travelers, it will add greatly to the illusion. While all of their movements should synchronize with their lines, one position should flow gracefully into the next.

When they cover the manger scene with their wings, they may stand on the step in front of the manger, with arms outstretched so that their hands slightly overlap. Their costumes, falling straight down from their wrists to the floor form an effective curtain, behind which the manger characters can quickly take their positions.



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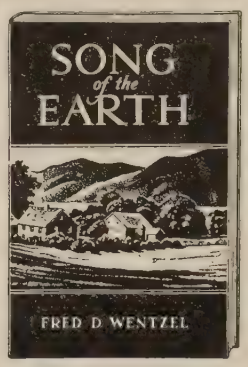
by Fred D. Wentzel



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—Frank S. Mead, in the *Christian Herald*

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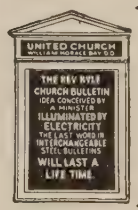

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Current Feature Films

Estimates prepared by Independent Filmscores

Film suitable for:

M—Mature audience
Y—Young People
C—Children
**—Outstanding for Family*
†—Outstanding for Adults

Centennial Summer (Fox) Walter Brennan, Jeanne Crain, Linda Darnell, Dorothy Gish, Cornel Wilde. *Musical,* set in Philadelphia during 1876 Exposition, dealing with problems, financial and romantic, of family of railroad yardmaster. . . . Lacks spontaneity and charm of *Meet Me in St. Louis,* which it obviously aims to emulate. Songs by Jerome Kern are tuneful, and introduced naturally, rather than spectacularly set. Situations, however, are strained, and often in poor taste as they strive too hard for cuteness and innuendo. *Pleasant* but very *thin* as to story. **M,Y**

Crack Up (RKO) Herbert Marshall, Pat O'Brien, Claire Trevor. *Melodrama.* Cruelly beaten up, museum curator wonders if he has lost his mind, retraces steps, eventually discovers nefarious plot to substitute copies for genuine masterpieces the museum has on loan from Britain. . . . Has some excellent sequences of *suspenseful* uncertainty, some deeply etched character portraits and scenes, but fades at edges until the plot becomes scattered, *unintelligible.* **M,Y**

Don't Gamble with Strangers (Mono.) Peter Cookson, Bernadene Hayes, Kane Richmond. *Melodrama.* Card sharpers join forces to take over gambling enterprises in small city; when the man shows interest in local girl, his woman partner denounces him to police as both are suspected of murder. . . . Ruthless, worthless people in a stupid story existing only for the supposed "thrills" it produces. *Ugly.* **M**

In Old Sacramento (Rep.) Hank Daniels, Wm. Elliott, Constance Moore. *Melodrama.* A tale of gold-rush days, centering around a sympathetically portrayed gambler who doubles as mysterious hold-up man, the strait-laced music hall performer he loves, and the young prospector about to be lynched as supposed perpetrator of the hold-up crimes. . . . Handsomely set and well directed, this is *better than average western fare.* May be criticized on grounds that the villain hero, despite his punishment, is treated so sympathetically. **M,Y**

Monsieur Beaucaire (Par.) Joan Caulfield, Bob Hope, Cecil Kellaway, Patric Knowles, Joseph Schildkraut. *Farce.* The Tarkington story reversed, with Hope as a chicken-hearted barber forced by circumstance to exchange identity with French duke famed as swordsman and lover. . . . 18th century costumes and settings cannot overwhelm the usual Hope nonsense in a *gay piece of foolishness,* abounding in wisecracks and slapstick. **M,Y,C**

My Pal, Trigger (Rep.) "Gabby" Hayes, Jack Holt, Roy Rogers, Trigger. *Drama.* Roy relates how Trigger came to be—after crotchety owner of fine palomino stallion had refused to permit its mating with Roy's "Lady." Involves evil machinations of rancher-night club operator with his gang. . . . *Nice horses and pleasant cowboy singing.* But the swank night club as natural accompaniment of ranch life is incongruous, the *story unmotivated.* **M,Y,C**

Mysterious Intruder (Col.) Richard Dix. *Melodrama* in series projected as told by the "whistler." This one is about a private detective hampered by police in efforts to track down secret treasure, punctuated by murders, brutal fights, etc. . . . *Unpleasant,* action-filled melodrama. **M,Y**

The Stranger (RKO) Billy House, Edward G. Robinson, Orson Welles, Loretta Young, *Melodrama.* How the man responsible for Germany's death camps, having fled before capture, is finally trapped in the peaceful New England town where he has become the respected member of a boys' school faculty. . . . Essentially a "chase" film, with some effective use of camera to tell story. So *unconvincing* and self-conscious as to story and performance, however, that it produces little real suspense. **M**

For Possible Discussion

The following pictures have possibilities for discussion in young people's groups, as suggested in the reviews below:

Atomic Power (The March of Time) *Documentary* tracing story of why and how the U. S. undertook splitting of atom, charting steps in development of bomb and picturing fully the first test. Famous scientists re-enact roles in story. . . . Lays stress on drama of the project rather than on its implications. A *valuable* historical document. *For possible discussion:* Implication of the discovery for the future of the world. **M,Y**

Bad Bascomb (MGM) Wallace Beery, Marjorie Main, Margaret O'Brien. *Melodrama.* Fugitive "bad man" and pal take refuge with Mormon wagon train, where they pose as innocent travelers. Precocious child's attachment to "bad man" softens him, leads him to risk capture to save train, give self up to law. . . . Embarrassingly *overacted,* and meandering in story, this is a repetition of many previous Beery films. *For possible discussion:* Tendency of movies to make of the villain a lovable "softie," with his final undoing made unconsciously a cause for regret. **M,Y**

Easy to Wed (MGM) Lucille Ball, Van Johnson, Esther Williams, Keenan Wynn. *Comedy.* Technicolored tale about the scheme of an editor to forestall libel suit brought by heiress against the paper, by involving her with penniless reporter for whom he set up phony marriage with his own brainless girl friend. . . . Marriage appears here as just one convenient tool in the *farcical, breathless,* lighter-than-air plot, played spiritedly in sophisticated manner. *For possible discussion:* Attitude of casualness regarding marriage. **M,Y**

The Killers (Univ.) Albert Dekker, Ava Gardner, Burt Lancaster, Edmund O'Brien. *Melodrama.* Expansion of Hemingway story about gangster murder whose victim simply waited in his room, knowing escape to be futile. Flashbacks give a hypothetical reason for his apathy in a story of greed, crime, misdirected ambition, double crossing. . . . Despite admiration for its magnificent suspense, taut, ingeniously plotted quality, one views film with regret as still another in series concerned with sordid, ugly lives, existing mainly for sadistic thrills it produces. *For possible discussion:* A study of why men become gangsters. A study also in what it is about crime that attracts men and women, and in misdirected ambition, the untruth in the phrase, "honor among thieves," etc. What about films like this that exist mainly for the sadistic thrills they produce? What would be the effect of this one? **M**

Notorious (RKO) Ingrid Bergman, Cary Grant, Leopoldine Constantin, Claude Rains. *Melodrama.* A lady's cynicism, hard drinking, lack of morals (inspired by father's treason), convince U. S. intelligence she is equipped to ferret out secrets of postwar nazi activity in Brazil. She is, and she does —but not without skirting disaster by a hair's breadth. . . . The usual skillful *suspenseful* melodrama to be expected from Director Hitchcock—plus something new in his films: a tender yet emotionally explosive, very adult love story. Extensive drinking, but with a purpose in plot. *For possible discussion:* As a study in why people drink. Was drinking, cynicism, flouting of morals the way for the girl to "take out" her disillusionment in her father? What about the love story; is it based on enough solid fundamentals to be likely to endure? **M**

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Films for Church Use

Recommendations by reviewing groups of the Committee on Visual Education of the International Council of Religious Education.

These materials are available through the denominational bookstores, members of the Religious Film Association.

For All People

16mm. sound (approximately 20 minutes; will probably rent for $6.00.)

Produced by Cathedral Films for the United Christian Missionary Society, this new film (with no denominational references) tells the dramatic story of a mission church in Los Angeles which ministers to people of many races and nations, including Negroes, Chinese, Japanese and Mexicans.

The story centers around the efforts of the youthful pastor and his wife to overcome the antagonism of the young people of the community and to lift them from the rowdyism of gang life into cooperative Christian living.

Through the help of the son of the Negro caretaker, the minister succeeds in winning the loyalty of the gang leader and many of his followers. The whole program is jeopardized when the leader, in a successful effort to keep his sister's sweetheart from perpetrating a theft, is himself suspected of attempting to steal from his employer and is discharged.

When the minister goes to request reinstatement of the boy, the employer refuses with, "You can't trust these foreigners." In response the minister tells how the boy and his friends have come to be loyal supporters of the church. So effective is the story that the employer not only reinstates the boy but comes to the church to see how this successful program operates.

The film not only presents an inspiring message on the work of the church in improving race relations and overcoming juvenile delinquency, but is good entertainment as well. Recommended for all ages from junior to adult for mission study, young people's meetings and Sunday evening services.

Content and Technical Quality: EXCELLENT.

Bible Sunday Films

The following films are appropriate for use on Universal Bible Sunday. They are available from the offices of the American Bible Society as listed in the footnote on page 14 of this issue.

The Book for the World of Tomorrow. 16 mm. Sound, black and white, 26 min. $10.00 or offering for Society. The story of the making of the Bible and its influence, past, present and future.

We Bear Witness. 16 mm. Sound, black and white, 22 min. $5.00. The missionary challenge for Japan.

At Work with the Word. 16 mm. Silent, kodachrome, 35 min. $5.00. The work of the American Bible Society.

The following stereopticon lectures; colored glass slides 3¼ x 4¼, with manuscript; about 40 minutes each: *The Old Book Finding New Friends; The Book Goes Forth; Every Man in His Own Tongue.*

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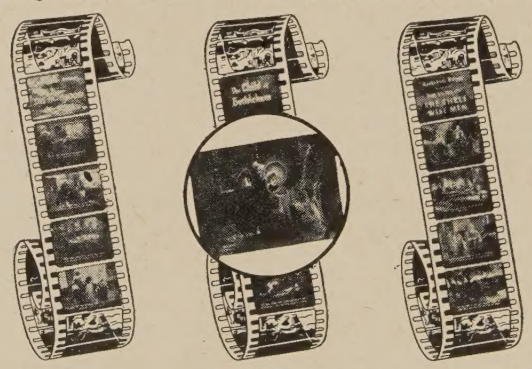

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Editorials

Is the pastor's membership class enough?

A LEADER in religious education sat at lunch one day with a woman active in a movement for child evangelism. She told about their methods: getting children of nine or ten years of age together in a home; giving them illustrated talks about the plan of salvation, along with moving music; and getting them to accept Christ, an acceptance, he noted, that was worded in adult language. He then asked the question that nearly every reader of the JOURNAL would have asked, "What do you do then to guide the growth of these young converts? Do you start classes for them, or for their parents? How do you nurture this good beginning?"

The answer was, "Nothing. We do not need to. When we secure their acceptance we have done the only part required of us. The Lord takes care of their growth from this point on. Instead of organizing classes for them, we go on to other groups and secure their decisions."

Most readers of this magazine are probably mildly amused at this calm abdication of responsibility for new converts. While believing profoundly that the Lord is always at work in the life of a new and growing Christian, religious educators would be among the last to go off on something else and leave everything to Him. They wisely believe that they and He work together on these things. And yet—at another point many pastors make essentially the same error as this lady.

They conduct a Pastor's Class for new members during Lent, pour their very hearts into it, do there the hardest and best work of the year in those six weeks crowded with many other things. They take a grand group before the elders, line them up impressively in the front of the church on Easter Sunday, administer the first communion to the new members. And then (not always, mark you, but all too often) they blithely leave these boys and girls to the assumed carry-over of an excellent course and the assumed infallibility of "the education process" in the ongoing program of the church.

They have moved away from the older type of revival but the essential evil of that method, namely, the willingness to trust the outcome to someone, or something else, in a new form is still theirs.

Contact with a good many churches and with those who know many more convinces us that too often pastors, deacons, elders, those most responsible for the spiritual life of all members, new and old, drop their detailed concern about these young converts once their names are on the church roll. True, they are concerned about them in a general way, but not in the specific steps that make up growth in Christian living. True, if Bill got drunk six months after Easter, they would be excited. But what if he is not growing in his prayer life, in his appreciation of worship, in his giving, in his Christian service and leadership, and "in favor with God and man?" Is there a "follow-up" of these? Sometimes, yes. But many, many times, little or none.

In many cases these young members do grow. One "Bill" happened to come under the influence of a woman leading the junior high department who understood his good points as well as his shyness and his gruff manner and brought him out into a grand young Christian leader. But this just happened. The church, *as such*, had no plan for discovering what he needed and seeking a way to supply it. For many who came into the church the same Easter that he did, nothing like this happened. And in that fact lies the nub of this preachment which, it is hoped, has laid a need on many hearts and has not made anyone angry. The writer has been all too guilty of the neglect herein portrayed.

No remedy for this oversight is given here. That will come later. In the April issue, which will reach its readers just as these pastors' classes close, there will be an article under the title, *"Pastor—what now?"* which will contain a plan for helping new church members grow in Christian living.

Come behind the scenes!

PEACE TIME is three times as hard on an editor or publisher of a magazine as war time. In war there is only one prime question to make him nervous when the telephone rings: "Has the War Production Board cut again the tonnage of paper for publications the size of ours?"

But in peace there are three such questions:

Has some big publishing house taken a cue from others and bought a pulp mill, this time the one our paper comes from?

Are increased costs forcing the printer to raise our printing price *again?*

Will the printers' strike now pending somehow force our printer to close so that some dark day we will miss an issue entirely?

In addition to all of which there is the fact that recently we have been unable to phone the executive of our printing company who handles our JOURNAL because he, other executives, and the president of the company are out in the plant stitching up the JOURNAL and the other various publications. These are some of the problems with which the publishers of all magazines wrestle these days. Readers of the JOURNAL can know that those responsible for their magazine are exerting every effort to provide the best possible JOURNAL at the lowest possible cost, to judge accurately in advance the business situation, and to serve their readers to the limit of their ability and opportunity.

First get the facts

LAST MONTH the leading editorial on this page made a strong plea for churches' getting the facts about trends in population before building new churches. In that connection we chanced the other day on a paragraph in another publication in which this idea was being applied in another area of life.

This publication had printed some figures of a sociologist as to increase in divorces following the war. There was to be a record high in 1947 of 600,000 divorces, or sixty per cent of the number of marriages. A bright lady operating a guest house in Reno, Nevada, for those awaiting the Great Release wrote the editor: "If these figures are anywhere near correct, I think I should buy another house—don't you? . . . We are already overcrowded and sometimes wonder where we are going to put the people . . . Would it be at all possible to know in what price brackets this increase will come? You see the weekly rates range from $17 to $125, and I am wondering if I started another guest house in what price range it should be."

Since this note appeared before our JOURNAL was off the press, we cannot claim this as a by-product of our efforts. We can only hope that church people are as adept at picking up such ideas as this lady.

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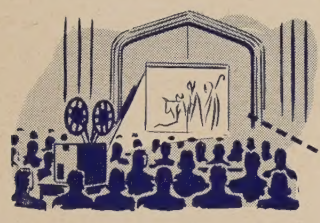

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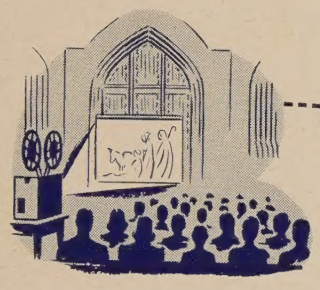

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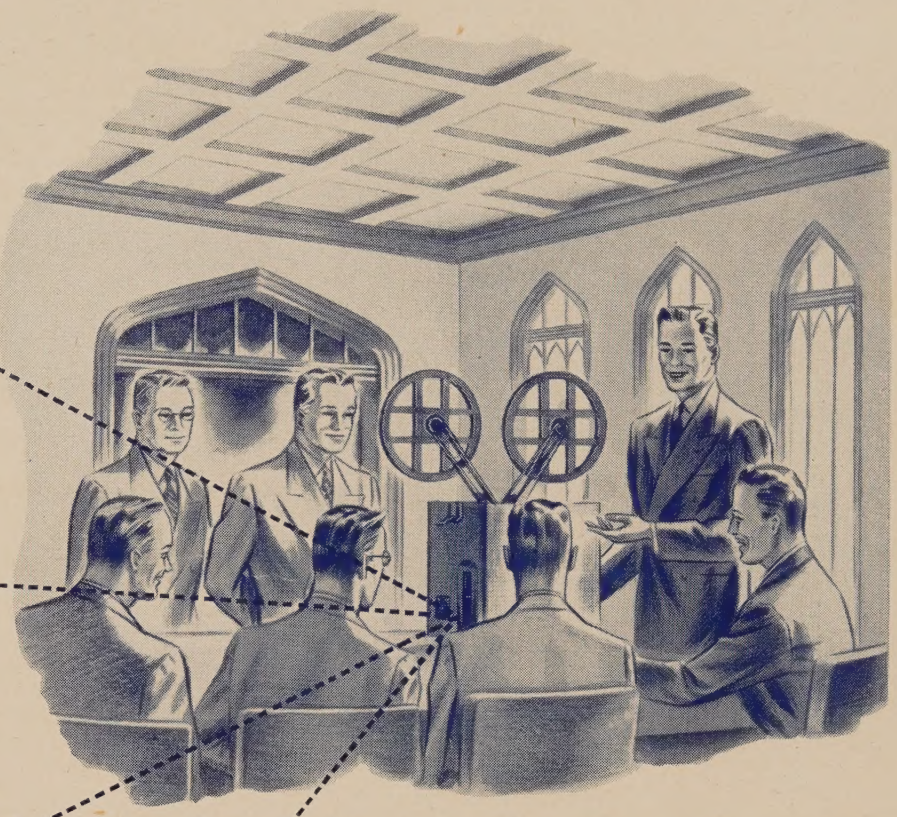
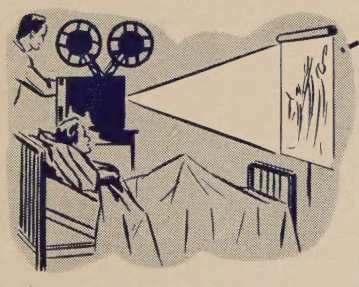
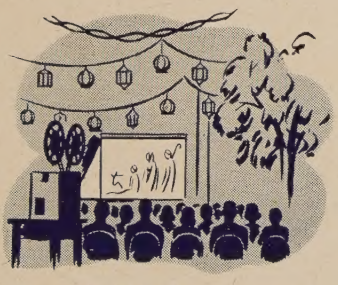




SICKROOM



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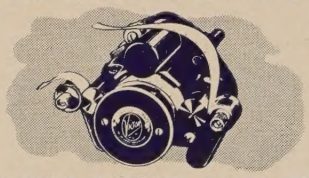

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The curriculum provides for a series of teacher's and pupil's manuals. Each Teacher's Book contains plans for two units of sixteen sessions each—one complete year's work for thirty-two one-hour sessions. Charts in each book summarize the purpose, content, and activities of each unit.

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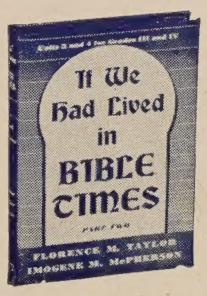

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This section of the curriculum is intended for use in the instruction of third- and fourth-grade pupils. Trained teachers have developed it to help children, through story and dramatic play, to enter into the life of people of Bible times.

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